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ABSTRACT

The natural process of learning language is to concentrate on what we mean, not only on how we are saying it. What we mean is dependent upon the context in which we speak. This context in turn depends on the society or the speech-community in which our speech act takes place. To be a member of a speech community is to know what language behavior fits what situation. In this sense, language is essentially a function of society, and each society has the language it needs in order to function. If sociolinguistics has to refer to people and to their use of language, it cannot be divorced from linguistics or be studied as an autonomous science. The abstraction of sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and even pragmatics from language as people speak it has hampered the development of effective second language teaching methods. (Author/JB)

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The Contextual Revolt in Language Teaching: Its Theoretical Foundations

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W.F.M.

The history of language teaching has been one of vacillating trends fueled largely by the changing theories of psychology, linguistics and education. During the first half of this century, language teaching has in turn been identified with the application of phonetics (the oral approach), of association psychology (the direct method), of structural linguistics (contrastive analysis and the audiolingual approach.)

During the forties, fifties and sixties it became fashionable to identify language teaching with applied linguistics with a consequent emphasis on the formal aspects of language. Pattern-practice and structural drills were the main activities of the language teacher.

In the late sixties and early seventies, however, there has been a revolt against this formalism, which had not accounted for the contextual reality of language. This reaction could be seen in the growing popularity of context-oriented audiovisual courses and the drift to the more radical solutions provided by the immersion and other forms of bilingual schooling. The theoretical foundation which was eventually placed under this movement and justified its existence became known as pragmalinguistics.

Pragmalinguists is simply a new word for an old concern. It is also known as *pragmatic linguistics*, *linguistic pragmatics* and, more simply, *pragmatics*. There are other names which depend on the field or doctrine referring to the phenomenon. In the field of language didactics, it has been known as contextualization. Structuralists excluded it as belonging to what they considered had nothing to do with linguistics. Studies involving cultural (Whorf & Sapir) and other contexts were put under metalinguistics.[1] Basically, all these terms refer to the study of language in context, and this concern is as old as the study of human language and of the thought behind it.

The bond between language and the context of its use has been stressed by most thinkers who have pondered the problem of human intercommunication---Plato and Artistotle, Kant, Locke, Mill and Wittgenstein---to name only these philosophers. Ethnologists like Malinowski have theorized on the inseparable link that normally exists between speech and its context. In sum, most sciences that have been concerned with man have had to face the problem of changes in the context in which he speaks.

At the beginning of the century, context was proclaimed to be the very basis of all understanding. In the contextual theory of meaning associated with the names of I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden, the structures and words which made up language were simply pawns the semantic value of which continually changed according to the contexts in which they were used [2]. This changing value of the basic

elements of each language was also recognized by linguists like Saussure, Bally and Firth. Most linguistics, however, chose to exclude context from their science, so that those who took context into account were said to be doing pragmatics, pragmatic linguistics, or more recently, pragmalinguistics.

All such appelations contain the denotation of practice which derives from the same source, πραλμα, the original Greek etymon for action. Etymologically, therefore, these terms could be rephrased as "the language of practice", "the linguistics of the practical", "the study of the language which is actually used", "the analysis of the practical consequences of speech". Yet, this meaning of *pragmatic* has long been obsolete in English; but not, however, in German where its homologue, *pragmatisch* has been used since the late sixteenth century. In the intervening time, the meaning of English *pragmatic* has evolved from "practical" to "methodical", to "shrewd", to "dogmatic and doctrinaire". It is with this latter meaning that English writers of Jonathan Swift's generation used the term, e.g. "pragmatic and overweening".

By the mid-nineteenth century, *pragmatism* had become synonymous with pedantry. That was the time, it will be remembered, when the new science of etymology began to flourish, and academics began to appropriate Greek etymons into technical terms which were then entering most European languages at an ever increasing rate. Historians, it seems, were the first to use the term *pragmatic* in a restricted and technical sense---referring to the causes, consequences and practical lessons of history. But it was philosophers who popularized the term when they began using it, at the turn of the century, for the idea that the meaning of a concept is its practical consequences. Later, and all through this century, logicians, social scientists and even the general public incorporated derivatives of the term in their respective vocabularies. For reasons which will be stated later, students of language have been late-comers in the re-appropriation of the etymon. In the study of language acquisition, the term *pragmatic* has been applied to the first phase of infant speech, the instrumental, regulatory and interactional. [3]

The term *pragmalinguistics* seems to intend a link with the linguistic sciences instead of with the more general theory of language which is often referred to as *semiotics*, a branch of which is called *pragmatics*, the study of the relationship between language, its users and its uses. Yet, *pragmatic linguistics* has been defined as "the science of language use", "the study of the conditions that govern the use of language", "the study of the concrete practice of language with regards to the actual use and users", "the study of the concrete conditions in which language users use language", "the study of the necessary conditions that govern the use of language". Likewise, *linguistic pragmatics* has been defined as the "study of the conditions that determine discourse and understanding between people using what they consider to be the same language" (an inquiry into the constitutive conditions of the human dialogue), being a theory of language as human activity, in the final analysis, a theory of speech. Another meaning of the term would englobe not only the study of the users and uses of speech, but that of the users and uses of linguistics as well. [4]

All these terms have much in common. On the one hand, they relate to the practical; on the other hand, each within its own family of theories, is associated with the philosophy of the practical whereby the value of any idea depends on how it works out in reality. This attitude toward ideas is indeed as old as philosophy. In every generation, it has been proclaimed by thinkers who revolted against the dominance of dogma, the primacy of abstract principle and the confinement of closed systems in the governance of the affairs of mankind. It will be recalled that Emmanual Kant was one of the first to use the etymon in reference

to a system of thought based on experience rather than on dogma. He qualified this type of thought as *pragmatisch*, by which he meant experimental or empirical. The pragmatic criterion of experience became central to the thinking of other philosophers like George Berkeley, John Stuart Mill and of a whole line of Scottish thinkers who practiced a philosophy of common sense. The elaboration of this criterion into a separate philosophy, or school of thought, however, was the work of two American thinkers---William James and Charles S. Peirce. For James, the purpose of thought was the establishment of relationships, of links with our environment, and meaning was the use of ideas for purposes of action.

It is the work of Peirce, however, that is most relevant to the language sciences, since he considered his work as part of a more comprehensive theory of language and thought. His pragmatism is essentially a theory of meaning. It is a study of the relationship between language and other signs with the purpose of clarifying their meaning. In its primary form, this relationship may be stated thus: If something is said by someone in this situation, others will probably react thus. This constitutes Peirce's theory of meaning which, simply stated, says "If this is done, this will happen" or"If you say this in this situation, this is what people will think you mean". The dialectic therefore is essentially conditional.

Some thinkers, however, go beyond this and include the question, "Why was this done, or said?" in addition to "What effects did it have?" For observation of the effects may oblige a re-interpretation of the intentions. This might presuppose a social structure in which speakers live and a study of the kind of forms of interactive language behaviour of which different cultures are capable. How universal are these and how characteristic are they of man as a species?

The very emergence of man as a species is attributable to his discovery and use of language as a system of significant symbols which permitted him to conceive his environment and eventually to control it. Some pragmatic philosophers, like Royce, Lewis and Mead, have made this use of language basic to their philosophy. [5]

As pragmatic philosophy developed, it became more and more concerned with language and its uses. It also became more formal and logical in the works of thinkers like Charles Morris who theorized on the relationships between signs, language and behaviour. [6] For Morris, pragmatics was the theory of sign relations. He attempted to formulate the theory as a set of rigourously stated rules. These rules gave "the conditions in the interpreters (of the language sign) under which the sign vehicle is a sign". In the tradition of Rudolf Carnap and the Vienna Circle, the study of these conditions was quite separate from that of syntax and grammar, which was also to be governed by rules. [7] If an investigation made explicit reference to the speaker or to the user of a language, then it was assigned to the field of pragmatics. Pragmatics was defined as the study of sign systems with respect to user relations. [8]

Later, logicians, like W.V. Quine, developed as a major concern the establishment of formal pragmatic relationships between words and things, and the purely arbitrary boundaries between so-called scientific categories and disciplines which originally had been based on some contingent or practical criteria. [9] In this spirit, Ludwig Wittgenstein went back to the analysis of everyday sentences to discover the relationship between language and logic. [10]

In sum, pragmatic philosophers have had a wider view of language than linguistics have had, and as such, they have, unlike most linguistics, taken the context of reality into account, while also inquiring into both the meaning of language and its necessity. One could argue therefore that it is not pragmatics that is a branch of modern linguistics, but rather linguistics which is part of

pragmatics. For, if context is basic to all language and thought, pragmatics cannot simply be an extra component or complement to such conceptual systems as structural linguistics or transformational generative grammar. In the present state of our knowledge of language, and of the disciplines which study it, the appropriate place for pragmatics is that of a concern which must be central to the study of language, one on which other concerns like grammar, phonetics and lexicology can be based.

There are two types of pragmatic theories, one based on the code, the sign system, the language as such, on what has been known as *langue*; the other, based on the message, the utterance, speech, or what is known as discourse (i.e. *parole*). The first of these types reveals a tendency to elaborate universal theoretical models of language; the second may reveal either theoretical or practical tendencies, that is, either speech-act theory or, pragmatically true to form, the production of solutions for language teachers, translators and others, to the practical problems posed by the use and users of language in context.

There are several sorts of theoretical pragmatics and of pragmatic pragmatics, if one may use such an expression, both of which represent dangers for the language teacher (see below). The theoretical pragmatics is autonomous; its validity remains to be justified. In as much as one of the theories of pragmatics becomes a closed system or a fixed doctrine, it deviates from the pragmatic approach the aim of which has always been to do away with such restrictions. It is important for practicioners like language teachers not to be carried away by any one-sided doctrine---pragmatic though it may claim to be. For the use of language is ever evolving and may defy definitive systematization; language is also the most complex skill that man has mastered.

Any pragmatics that conforms to the everyday reality which language teachers know, must be part of the big picture of language as the essential fabric of human environment. No matter how attractive a new language theory may seem, it is important that it take into account this basic reality of language.

It must not discount the fact that all creatures, including man, must live in some sort of environment. In order to exist in this environment, people must devise ways of dealing with it, since they may both be affected by it and have an effect upon it. The environment of man is varied and changeable; to deal with it, he has evolved a traditional guide to behaviour, which includes what he eats and wears, how he gets his food and clothing, the tools and techniques he uses, his relationships with others and the institutions, customs, laws and beliefs which enable him to work with his fellows. This guide to behaviour, enabling man to deal with his environment, and all it includes, is largely acquired and retained through traditional conceptual categories, most of which may be transmitted through language. The language provides the acoustic or visual forms through which categories are coded for use in communication. It is through the language that one can get at a conceptual category, which is simply one of many possible ways of arbitrarily grouping objects, events and other phenomena so that one can think and talk about them. [11]

These conceptual categories (or concepts) are coded in the vocabulary, in the nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and other form-classes of each language; they cover everything that man can see, feel and imagine. Many of the words in a language are labels for categories of notions, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, relationships and judgments which have no direct counterpart in the physical world. Although the categories of non-physical phenomena may be as indicative as anything else of the differences between various cultures (or guides to mental and physical behaviour), they are hardly the best type of concepts to be used initially in the study of such relations. One must begin with the concrete, or the

concrete word which bears the closest relation between the word and the thing. Such concepts of the concrete, which are first-level abstractions from reality have become associated with elements of particular languages, not only nouns, but other words, word-groups, sentences, endings and intonations, so that they begin to stand for these concepts within the culture or community where they are used---as truly as a coin or other piece of currency stands for what it can buy.

These elements of language were called upon to stand for more and more as the culture of the users increased in complexity. It becomes more efficient to deal with some concept in groups and groupings of groups, until high levels of abstractions are reached at which simple words become far removed from the reality for which they once stood. Where the element of language, which is really a symbol (S) of something, stood for a simple conceptual category (C), it now, in addition to this, stands for much more. From ($S_1 = C_1$) to ($S_1 = C_1 + C_2 + C_3$). In addition to this removal of a direct link with sensation through the development of abstract meanings, a language sign may be used to stand for several of these concepts---some of which are quite unrelated. Furthermore, the same elements of language, the linguistic symbol, may be used to stand for other elements of language and their corresponding meanings ($S_3 = S_1 + S_2$). At this stage, the language has become an instrument of highly abstract thought. Because it is by now far removed from the self-correcting contexts of reality, this use of the simple elements of language actually promotes misunderstanding, ambiguity and error in human intercommunication; for no two people possess the same set of concrete impressions upon which some of the abstractions are supposed to be based. At the more basic and practical level of language use, however, these impressions and their corresponding linguistic associations are self-normalizing, for, in order to function, they must have enough in common and their inter-relationships must be stable enough to operate within the context in which they are used.

Just as the forms, meanings and conventions of a language are transmitted from one generation to the next, the language of each community of sign users is the product of the cultures which has used it. If meaning is the product of the past, it is also indebted to the future. The more abstract elements of the language, however, are free from this community bondage. They become instruments of abstract thinking---self-contained systems enabling speakers and writers to communicate to listeners and readers in all quarters of the globe. Yet, because of the necessary ambiguity of all natural language, philosophers and scientists have used it only as a basis for further abstraction, creating and using the seemingly context-free artificial codes of mathematics and symbolic logic. [12] This enables users of many different natural languages to communicate in the same fashion within a restricted area of abstract thought in a way which otherwise would be impossible. For no two natural languages use these abstractions in the same way. What is grammar in one language is vocabulary in another. What is coded in one language may be uncoded in another. One language may see nothing special in a situation; another may cover it with a fixed expression or sentence.

Where one language may respond grammatically to a change in context, another may do so by altering a word or even by calling for an entirely different sentence. Where the same change of context may affect a single word in one language, it may call for the formulation of an entirely different sentence in another language. If the English *Hello, Mr. Martin* is equivalent to the French *Bonjour, Monsieur,* it does not hold that, *Hello, stranger* can be rendered as,

Bonjour l'étranger. French requires a different approach to the situation as expressed in the sentence. *On ne vous voit plus.*

Contrariwise, when the speaker may have to change the sentence when speaking one language, he may simply have to change a tone when speaking the other language. In the context of place, for example, *I just work here* is equivalent in French to *Je ne travaille qu'ici.* Changing the context to one of person (status) requires but a change of stress in English *I just work here*; in French, it calls for an entirely different sentence *Ce n'est pas moi qui commande.* Or the change may create a multiple meaning, calling for different sentences in the other language, the choice depending on the context. A change in tone in English may call for a different sentence in French.

That will be the day. / *Ce sera le jour.*

That will be the day. (seldom) / *Ce n'est pas pour demain.*

That will be the day. (never) / *Quand les poules auront des dents.*

The fact, however, that a change in context may call for different sentences in the other language does not necessarily imply that each of these has a different meaning. For example:

Don't mention it. / *N'en parlez pas.*

Changing the context to that of a response to a *Thank you very much.*

/ *De rien.*
Don't mention it. / *Il n'y a pas de quoi.*
/ *Je vous en prie.*

The options may depend on the dialect, or they may be synonymous within one, some or all the dialects of the same language.

/ *Don't mention it.* (U.K.)
/ *Not at all.* (U.K.)
De rien. / *You're welcome.* (U.S.)
/ *Uh, Uh.* (U.S.)
/ [zero]. (i.e. silence) U.K. & U.S.)

In sum, different languages react differently to changes in different types of context. Yet, each language is the prisoner of the wider context in which it is used, that is, the context of culture, within which the entire hierarchy of all other contexts can have meaning---verbal and non-verbal.

Functioning within the context of culture are the contexts of communication, which include the contexts of situation, within which the contexts of words have their meanings.

Since languages are both the products and the constituents of cultures, different cultures will make use of the elements of language in a different way, selecting what is important for the culture and ignoring the rest. Some cultures may represent one area of the physical environment by making numerous functional distinctions in the concept categories and the language elements standing for them. Others may make few such distinctions. Most languages, for example, seem to possess conceptual categories for the three forms of life's most basic and important substance---water (solid, liquid and gas). But not all have the same type and number of such categories. For the solid form, most

European languages distinguish only between ice and snow. Languages traditionally used in arctic environments, however, distinguish more types in their code. In Baffin Land, in 1968, this writer was able to identify twenty-one distinctly different words for types of snow and ice, some words requiring long sentences to translate into a European language. [13] Snow and ice phenomena represent richer conceptual categories in Baffin Eskimo than they do in English, and these are more highly coded. It would seem, therefore, that conceptual categories, as manifested in the code of the language, might be used as an indication of the importance which the phenomena they represent may have in the environment of the people traditionally using that language.

How many such areas are as culturally universal as water? Food, clothing, weather, shelter, kinship, play, and how many more? In order to study differences in the context of culture, we should have to discover the extent of universality of extra-linguistic categories on which situations oblige people to communicate by means of language.

We can postulate that all human beings have a body and that all parts of the body, though segmented differently by different languages, are essentially the same. Likewise, we can assume that all beings must eat in order to keep alive (food), that they must sleep and protect themselves from the elements (shelter and clothing). They are all affected by the elements and must consequently have some conception of weather. [14] But how far can one continue along these lines without running into more and more cultural exceptions as the list gets longer. We may find, for example, that not all people possess modes of transportation, habits of smoking, or of mailing letters.

In other words, what we need from a science that claims to include the study of context at this level is not *a priori* generalizations about universality, but attested degrees of generality of the semantic fields in which language-bound situations occur in the context of communication. This could include measures of the cultural diversity and generality of affective meaning systems. It can also include the type of non-verbal communicative behaviour that is expected in different contexts. This varies from culture to culture. [15] It is within this context of a specific culture that the other contexts of communication, of situation and of words can have meaning.

The context of communication can be summed up as answers to questions of *what*, *why* and *how*, while the context of situation specifies the *who*, *where* and *when* of discourse.

The question of *what* is being communicated has pre-occupied a generation of researchers into languages for special uses, register variants, specialized vocabularies and technical styles. If one is writing about sailing, for example, one will use expressions and words quite different from what one would use if writing about law. A conversation with a neighbour comes into a different linguistic context than a discussion with a specialist in one's own field. Studies of the grammatical and lexical content of different fields are now being made through the use of exact and quantitative methods.

Secondly, the question of *why* is likely to affect the contexts of any communication. The real purpose of the communication may be more varied than is first apparent. It may be to persuade, to entertain, to inspire, or simply to inform; or it may be some combination of all these. It may be unwittingly for some expected phatic communion, as is evident in the offering of condolence, everyday greetings and cocktail party banter. Effects of variations in the purposes of communications have been studied in association with discourse analysis and speech act theory. Searle and Austin have specified the conditions attendant

upon acts of promising, advising, warning, greeting, congratulating, and so on, as a set of relationships between what is said and what is done. [16]

Thirdly, *how* the communication is made may involve the written or the spoken word---or both. The spoken word may include conversation, reading aloud, play acting, and the like, while the written word includes many genres like reports, memos, letters, briefs, novels, poems, testaments, minutes, resolutions and many others. Attempts to systematize the linguistic implications of these various modes of communication have been undertaken only in the past decade. [17]

Within these contexts of the *what, why* and *how* of specific acts of discourse, the situations in which the actual communication takes place may vary according to *who* is involved, *when* and *where* the speech act occurs. In other words, the contexts of situation include the contexts of *person*, of *time* and of *place*.

The context of *person* varies both according to the role-relation and the attitude relation, that is, who's who and how they feel about it. Both the diversity and the intensity of these relations vary greatly from language to language. Take for example the range of subtleties in interpersonal role and attitudinal relations which one must select when ending a letter in French: *Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les plus distingués. Croyez, cher collègue, à l'assurance de mon entière collaboration. Je vous prie de recevoir, cher ami, mes salutations les plus cordiales.* and dozens of other fixed phrases and permutations thereof. When ending comparable letters in English, the choice is much smaller and less complex---*Yours truly, yours sincerely, or cordially yours*.

The tone and implied relationships of the ending must not conflict with the form of address at the beginning. Nor must its implication be assumed to be equivalent from one language to the next. Where English *Dear Paul* might range from intimacy to mere acquaintance, the French *Cher Paul* would be restricted to intimacy; and its mistaken use might offend even a friend of long standing who had not expected more than the cordiality of *Cher Monsieur*, instead of the more formal *Monsieur*, which, in the same formal context, might appear in English as *Dear Mr. Martin*. Any calque on this in French *(Cher Monsieur Martin)* could be both contextually and linguistically offensive since in France such a form is excluded from the accepted options of epistolary style. Likewise, the more intimate *Cher ami* cannot be used in the same contexts as *Dear Friend*, which is now almost restricted to the impersonality of circular letters. The type of language behaviour expected between one person and another is not restricted to pronouns of address. Some languages have strict rules of how people in different social roles should address one another---son to father, student to teacher, inferior to superior. Such considerations have now become the object of research. [18]

Less is known, however, about contexts of attitudinal relationships as they affect usage in different languages. The intimate *Up you go, chaps* might thus be formalized as *Visitors should go upstairs at once*. [19] Although, on the basis of English alone, some categorization has been attempted; categories such as "frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate" have, for example, been proposed. [20]

The trouble with such *a priori* classifications---as with many of the illusions of the conflicting schools of linguistics---is that one is never quite sure which schemes of categorization, if any, belong to a given language and which categories exist only in the minds of the linguists who have thought them up. Little harm is done perhaps as long as such schemes are treated as games.

The danger is in their application. By assuming that all languages have the same number of categories, some linguists try to find them, and them only, in each of the languages which they attempt to describe. Even, however, if one assumes that a particular scheme applies only to one language, there is the further danger of trying to mould the facts of that language to fit the categories of the theory. As a case in point, let us examine the following specimen of language in context taken from a modern English novel. How do the five above categories account for the use of the italicized sentences each of which is intended to convey the same message but at different levels of speech?

The context is that of a scholastic agency in London. Leonard has just been interviewed by Dr. Stack, the headmaster of a grammar school in the South of England. After the interview, Leonard is told to check with the clerk on his way out and report on the results.

> "Leonard was endeavouring to formulate the results of his parley with Dr. Stack. *'I've got the job.'*---No, that would do for at home. *'I've been taken on.'* Sounded like a dock-labourer. *'I've been engaged.'* ---That was not quite the thing either. The clerk came to his rescue, and made further verbal experiments unnessary. *'Did Dr. Stack offer you the post?* What figure did he mention?'"
> (Paul Hehrer, *Schooling*. London: Jarrolds 1927, pp. 20-21)

From this exercise in categorizing levels of speech, one can conclude either that English must be using more than five clocks or that those which it allegedly has are not telling the right time.

Secondly, there is the context of *place*. Where something is said is also part of the context of situation. Some languages have expressions that are expected to be used only in certain places. While in English *Here's Paul now* may be used anywhere that Paul happens to be, including beside the phone, in French *Je vous passe Paul* is restricted to the telephone. Likewise, the English sign *Do not enter* may be used for places like buildings, rooms and streets, Which French expression is equivalent depends on the place. While buildings and rooms may be labeled *Défense d'entrer*, the same interdiction at the entrance of a street would require *Sens interdit*. Certain sentences are so place-dependent that their utterance alone is enough to evoke the place in which they are spoken. In French, the word *saignant* may well be used for the English *bloody*, but as a sentence *(Saignant)* evokes a response, and a specific thing (rare meat) and a place (at table).

Thirdly, *time* is often a crucial component of the context of situation. The time at which something is said or not said may be heavy with social implications. When to greet, what to say before entering, when leaving, in the morning, on New Year's Day---all these vary greatly from one language to another. Times at which certain speech acts are expected in different cultures, whether or not they are compulsory or optional and the meaning of related alternatives are important for anyone learning a foreign language. Whereas the English may start a meal in silence, the French and Japanese are expected to say something. It is not surprising that the French *Bon appétit* and the German *Mahlzeit* have no English equivalent. Yet, the options and the implications of what is said may vary from one language to another. The French *Bon appétit* does not include the same options and implications as does the Japanese *Dozo meshi-agatte kudasai* (Please do eat) and the obligatory response *Itadakimasu* (Thank you, I will).

What makes generalization difficult even within the same language is that there are few pure cultures. Even for French, one of the most standardized languages in the world, the situations in which language is used are far from iden-

tical in all parts of the French-speaking world. [21] In some areas, the *Bon appétit* is rarely used. But what renders investigations into this type of language behaviour even more complex is that many languages coexist with other dialects and languages, and speakers are influenced by them; conflicting conventions may sometimes cause both embarrassment and confusion. [22] Although all situations must necessarily include person, place and time, they may or may not include a context of action or reference to action. Some expressions in the language are thus bound or limited to certain action contexts. For example, the English sentence *He rolls his own* can only refer to the action of making cigarettes and has no French equivalent. To render it into French, therefore, the action must be specified in such sentences as *Il fait lui-même ses cigarettes.*

Contexts of action, place, person and time, however, are not mutually exclusive. *Travaux* as a road sign in French is interpreted as meaning that there are people ahead working on the road. In English, the same situation calls for some verbal specification, either adding reference to the context of person *(Men at work)* or to the context of place *(Construction ahead)*---or both. One cannot, however, on the basis of isolated examples generalize that some languages are more specific than others in their allusion to context: that English, for example, is more specific than French. In some cases, it will be the converse. The English sentence *You know the moves* referring to someone's expertise, experience or canniness, is an allusion to chess. In French, the context of the allusion requires to be specified in this case. *(Vous connaissez la marche des pièces)*

Many possible values of a word or expression become specific in the context of situation. Where there is no situation, it is possible that some language signs---even the most common, like *is*, will not mean the same things to everybody. (e.g. *Beauty is truth. Language is structure.*) It is in this sense that words do not mean; people do.

Although the basic relations in language are those that exist between linguistic forms and the extra-linguistic settings in the contexts of situation and communication and culture, the most operable relations are those that are found between the elements themselves as they change values according to the context of other elements with which they associate. Ignorance of the effects of this type of verbal context has even resulted in lost opportunities and lost battles. It is recounted that a joint British-French operation in the First World War would have failed if the French liaison officer (François Boillot) had not corrected the error of a subordinate who mistook the meaning of the word *find* in the operations order stating that "The French troops will find their own guides". Since the word *find* implied that the contingent was to supply guides for itself (cf. the expression *all found*), the French troops did not find or meet those they expected.

Words are not the only components of verbal context. There are also word-groups, word endings, word-order, stress, intonation and tempo. And each of these formal components may change any type of referent---person, place, thing, attitude, relationship. But each possible referent cannot have its own word. If there were a different word for all the things we wished to talk about, their very number would make it impossible to talk. What makes language possible is the functional and contextual polysemy of its components. The same language sign may take on a number of referents and families of referents according to its function within a structure. The word *round* may function as a noun, an adjective, a preposition, a verb, or an adverb. Likewise, a *fast* is a noun,

to fast (verb), a *fast* car (adjective) and run *fast* (adverb).

Even this, however, is not sufficient. Half a million words is not enough to express all the meanings of people who have used the English language. Many of these words must have several referents; in fact, some of them have hundreds of different meanings. For example, the word *run* as listed in the OED, has more than four hundred. One can discover these different meanings only through the context of the words with which *run* is used. The presence of other words like *to* and *for* will change the meaning. *Run to the office of a friend* is not like *Run for the office of alderman* as becomes evident when the word is rendered into another language, in French for example, *partir à la course*, as opposed to *présenter sa candidature*. Or, *conduire une auto* (run a car) *qui ne fonctionne pas* (doesn't run). All of which is unrelated to the meaning of the word in the sentence *These colours don't run* (i.e. *fast* colours)/ *Garanti bon teint* in French. And so it is with many of the four hundred or so other meanings of the word *run* in its various collocations.

To put it differently, *run* has an ambiguity potential of about 400, which can be used as one of the indices of semantic coverage. [23] What reduces this, is the linguistic context in which the word is used. Colours cannot obviously run in the same sense as people can. Nor can cars, although both people and cars can run fast. So, we put in the meaning that fits best.

No two languages are likely to group such referents in the same way. The hundreds of meanings of run in English are not those of its usual French equivalent, *courir*. Compare:

Run a car	/	*Conduire une auto*
Run away	/	*Partir à la course*
Run for election	/	*Présenter sa candidature*
Run a shop	/	*Tenir un magasin*

The meaning of each word or other element is not only affected by those with which it occurs; it also has an effect upon them. Linking *run* with *fast* gives a meaning to *fast* quite different from what it would be if the same word were linked with *stand*, for example. *Run fast* implies movement; *stand fast*, implies the opposite. A foreign language learner having learned to associate *fast* with rapid movement may be understandably perplexed when required to associate the same word with complete immobility---or with the explanation that *fast* colours are the kind that don't *run*. Unless, of course, he has learned both meanings in the context of their use.

Even with the aid of verbal context, however, there is room for much ambiguity. It is the situational context that helps to reduce this. In the transmission and understanding of meaning, all these contexts act and interact at once. Therefore, to explain the phenomenon of language or to describe its function by separating context from form and form from meaning is to falsify reality. Yet, this is what most linguists have done. One of the notable exceptions, however, has been the linguistics of Firth and his disciples, for whom context is central to any description of a language. Linguists, in general, have either left the study of context to others, or they have ignored its existence. The structuralism of Saussure was intended as part of a more general science of signs in society. Others who have admitted the possible effects of context have relegated it to other disciplines like philology, semantics, or pragmatics. Yet, the linguistics of the descriptivists and of the transformation generative grammarians, though ignoring context, came to be regarded as the be-all and end-all of language analysis. [24]

Separating pragmatics from other linguistics, or vice versa, is to assume that a system of language signs can be meaningful if not used, that one can study meaning as divorced from language, and that we can analyse the value of signs as distinct from their usage. But in reality, this value is actually set by usage which governs what people say in order to mean. Indeed, this is what language learning is all about. The natural process of learning language is to concentrate on what we mean, not only on how we are saying it. The more we get interested in what we say the less attention we pay to the way we are saying it. What we mean is dependent upon the context in which we speak. And this context in turn depends on the society or the speech-community in which our speech-act takes place. To be a member of a speech community is to know what language behaviour fits what situation. In this sense, language is essentially a function of society. And each society has the language it needs in order to function. If linguistics includes the study of context, of the uses and users of language, it must include the analysis of language in society. Otherwise, it becomes either redundant or non-linguistic. It becomes redundant since there are no speech-acts not founded in society. Society is composed of people, that is, of users of language. If sociolinguistics (the study of language in society) has to refer to these people and to their use of language, it cannot be divorced from linguistic or be studied as an autonomous science. Yet, sociolinguistics was created when sociologists began to inquire into the function of language in society. It was defined as "what sociologists say when they talk about language". But it also includes what they do with language when they use it as an indicator of social status or social activity, group allegiance and the like.

Likewise, psycholinguistics has been one of the concerns of psychologists who have used language indicators as cloudy windows through which to view the workings of the mind. Logicians have also used language as indicators of thought.

In as much as it has to do with the users and uses of language, "applied linguistics" is likewise redundant as a separate discipline. For, pragmatically, there can be no distinction between "applied" and "pure" linguistics, since the theoretical problems of a language are inseparable from its real problems. Making pragmatics part of linguistics, therefore, neutralized this distinction between pure and applied linguistics. The maintenance of this arbitrary distinction becomes harmful to both---driving the pure to ponder the meaningless and the applied to study the trivial.

If pragmatics includes the basic laws governing human social behaviour, pragmatic linguistics, it is argued, would include the social conditions related to the practice of the "production and consumption of language". These are the same conditions of society---conditions which any human science must take into account. "No single aspect of linguistics can be divorced from human societal practice." [25] Consequently, there can be only one linguistics.

Why then are there so many? It is because certain people at one time or another have seen the possibility of describing or explaining one aspect of language (e.g. its structure or its sentence production) with rigour and consistency by circumscribing this aspect alone, while excluding all others. Some of the closed conceptual frameworks which resulted have admittedly served a useful purpose in the development of the science of linguistics to the extent that it was possible to concentrate and systematize research on some important aspect of that complex and multidimensional phenomenon that we call language. In this way, we have been able to discover how languages evolve and are related in a systematic way, how much of the system of each language can be understood

as a set of recurring linear segments in the stream of speech which, in turn, can be the result of the transformation of certain basic syntactic structures into spoken or written sentences through the incorporation of such segments of the language as morphemes, words and phonemes. Students of language can be enlightened by the understanding of such advances in the science of linguistics, but only if they can place each new development into the proper context. But this has been difficult, if not impossible, for the student of language and particularly for the language teacher. For there has been an unfortunate conflict between so many of the language sciences (semantics, linguistics, phonology), which, in reality are complementary, and not mutually exclusive. What has usually happened is that each limited conceptual framework has been accepted as if it alone explained the phenomenon of language. Some of the theories on which these frameworks have been based have been nothing more than working hypotheses, valid only under certain conditions. But their limitations were soon forgotten, especially when attempts were made to apply the theories. What had also been forgotten was that, not only does the discipline of linguistics have no monopoly on the study of language, but that a purely linguistic theory cannot explain language. One example will suffice.

Almost all modern linguistic theories of language, including those of Saussure, Bloomfield and Hjelmslev, have postulated a dichotomy between diachronic and synchronic linguistics. This postualte has been workable with the type of analysis made up to now---descriptive and historical grammars. But it is a fiction, ignorable only under two conditions: (a) where language change is so slow and minute as to be imperceptible within the same generation, and (b) where the refinement of analysis does not go beyond distinctive features.

Since language must evolve, there must be variation and vacillation; otherwise, we would always be dealing with dead languages. The speed of language evolution through vacillation varies according to the social elements of control---likely to be different in illiterate and bilingual communities.

A code is a convention. In language, it is a social convention adopted by a speech community. But at any one point, certain elements of the code are preferred to others. At any one point in time, some language signs entering the code will be adopted quickly while others will be integrated gradually; any of these may disappear quickly or gradually, independently of their rate of adoption. Since the language code and its systems are in constant motion, the most appropriate description is not a synchronic one.

Saussure's original synchronic analogy compares a language to a game of chess, in which the state of the board is constantly changing according to certain fixed rules which the players must follow. This is an often quoted analogy used to explain the classical dichotomy between diachronic and synchronic linguistics. [26] The game can be described diachronically in terms of the moves of the players according to the rules, or synchronically in terms of the resulting distribution of the pawns on the board at any given point in time. The analogy and the dichotomy have indeed been useful as a basis for the elaboration of descriptive grammars and dictionaries of standardized languages, the very standardization of which is a factor in attenuating the natural variation and evolutionary tendencies of language.

Since few speakers will deviate greatly from the norm, and these may be limited to groups that are peripheral in space and time---dialect speakers, the very young and the very old---the number of people so deviating will not be in the majority, especially in those few languages which have a long

tradition of standardization. Even for these highly standardized languages, the analogy is far from perfect, since if one were to freeze this linguistic game of chess at any point in time, in addition to finding some pawns in some squares and others in others, one would find a number of pawns between squares, some emerging ones on one edge and entering ones on the other edge of a number of squares, squares of different dimensions, chessmen of different sizes, shapes and colours---bishops with the features of horses and horses becoming bishops---and procedures which were laxer or stricter than others in a game where the rules are forever changing.

In other words, we would find a state of entropy, of continual transformation within the system. For all living languages are in a perpetual state of entropy---some more than others, and at some times more than at other times.

Repeated interference from another code tends to increase this entropy, whereas literacy and standardization tend to decrease it. Two related unwritten languages will tend to blend into one more quickly than will two equally related languages with standardized written forms used by most of their speakers. And in formally standardized codes, interference will reach the point of resistance earlier than in nonstandardized languages, for the gap between what speakers of standard languages say and what they know they should be saying becomes quickly more apparent and tends to promote in the literate community such formalized defenses as purism, irredentism, and language repression. [27]

In the permissible range of variation in usage, the entropy of a language is affected by the degree of tolerance of the people who speak it. Some communities tolerate interference more than do others. This tolerance may have historical determinants; but it is also related to literacy, standardization and language contact. In nonliterate communities, it may be wider than in literate societies. In unilingual communities, it may be less than in multilingual groups where the incidence of use of linguistic features from several languages by any individual may actually form a single continuum. And in nonliterate, multilingual groups, the range of tolerance may even become identical to mutual intelligibility achieved by a speech economy whose norm is the sum of all operant codes. In such situations, the new elements entering the speech of individuals from another language or dialect may do so entirely by chance and never be heard again; or they may be repeated with such consistency as to give the impression that they have always been there.

If this is the generation whose language use is being described, the investigator is faced with what appears to him either as interference or as a code with a high degree of free-variation. Both are illusions conditioned by the postualte that we are dealing with one or two synchronic codes. And the treatment of bilingual material as synchronic becomes more and more complex as one multiplies cases, because in any evolving code, the degree of individual variation is a function of the rate of change.

And it is precisely the speed of this evolving code in situations of language contact that makes its description and measurement so difficult. What has to be described and measured is a two-dimensional continuum, one of which is continually alternating at the moment the other is inconsistently vacillating. Anyone making a standard grammar of the language on the basis of a synchronic description at a fixed point in time is treating the language as a fiction. This fiction of the synchronic, which has served so well in generating the abstractions of descriptive and transformational grammars, becomes quite unreal when used to describe the unstable and rapidly evolving systems of nonliterate communities and of languages in contact.

In addition to ignoring the historical context of each language, both descriptive and transformational linguistics had discounted the social context as well, since the sounds, words and sentences were by definition the objects of their respective sciences. This is understandable when one studies the history and development of linguistics. One of the historical reasons why language forms became the objects of study was that linguistics was the grandchild of philology, which was based on the study of written documents (still, it must be remembered, in context). Philology in turn had been the offspring of religions based on the establishment and interpretation of the true word. Grammar, originally based on the written texts, was one of the byproducts which structural linguistics attempted to improve and make scientific. As linguistics became more structural and abstract, using its own set of technical symbols instead of everyday language, it touched on and infringed upon the domain of symbolic logic.

Both transformational grammar and structural linguistics made words, sounds and sentences the objects of study, treating these objects in isolation from their concrete contexts. Such a study of language units as objects could not become objective, for its objectivity consists in rejecting what characterizes the object with regard to "its objectively constituent traits", on the ground that these could be handled afterwards by someone else once the real business of doing linguistics had been completed. Anything that did not concern the stated object of study or which did not come into the arbitrary limits of the closed framework was therefore put into the waste-basket, as it were. Such was the fate of contextual variables in most of the linguistics that has been applied to language teaching. This, coupled with the compartmentalization of the study of language into theories, schools, and disciplines converted linguistics into the *Sisyphosarbeit* of a generation of believers who wasted their youth putting untangled pieces of thread into various waste-baskets---phonetic, semantic and pragmatic. [28] Language teachers and other users of these linguistics began wondering whether there would be any thread left that they could use.

Not that there was nothing on the market. The most popular brands were supplied by appliers of structural linguistics and transformational grammars. A brief examination of these shows why they did not succeed in doing for the language teachers what they claimed they could do. Descriptive structural studies of a language may admittedly have taken their facts from out of the mouths of one or more typical speakers, called native informants. Quite often, what happened in practice was that a couple of informants were arbitrarily selected and fortuitously declared to be typical of the social group. Their reliability was rarely questioned. The interviewers or field workers were supposed to be objective, homogeneous, interchangeable and devoid of any expectations. The facts were quite different. Quite often, the paid informant stressed what seemingly gave pleasure to the field worker who showed obvious gratification when his theoretical expectations were confirmed. When the field worker was not a native speaker of the language, as was often the case, his description was both erroneous and quite removed from reality. No one was any the wiser when there were no literate native speakers to object; but when there were, the result was sometimes a complete fiasco.

Since structural linguistics did not take context into account and often ignored the existence of the meaning of words, it was not surprising that applied to language teaching, it did not produce the results expected. [29] Bloomfield having placed the study of meaning outside the province of linguistics, those who applied his linguistics to language teaching did so without recourse to meaning. Their products were methods of language teaching limited

to the iteration of pattern drills and phonetic exercises. Thus it was that a legitimate method of scientific inquiry became distorted into a fruitless didactic doctrine.

A reaction against the neglect of meaning in structural descriptions resulted in an attempt to analyse meaning as if it were structure. And the expression of meaning as the transformation of a basic underlying structure in the code (competence) to resulting sentences in the message (performance). It was on this theoretical construct of competence that transformational generative grammar was founded. Only sentences which the transformational model generated according to the transformational method were valid, since language was a closed system built along the model. According to this theory of generative grammar, language was equated with a quasi-infinite number of sentences capable of being generated by generative grammar. The failure of such a theory both as a language teaching instrument and as a general theory of language was in part due to the fact that, like its predecessors, its exponents tried to push in more than the conceptual framework would hold. Trying, for example, to account for the transformation of general meanings into specific sentences, without benefit of context, could only lead to an impasse.

The abstractions of transformational generative grammar, like those of descriptive and structural linguistics, could only have been validated with reference to the users and uses of specific languages located in space and time. Both these linguistic doctrines had assumed however that language was a self-contained system which was independent of its use. It therefore followed that language should be acquired through such manipulative skills as pattern practice and the control of these formal skills should precede any expressive use of the language.

Yet, neither the pattern learning model of the structuralists nor the innate ideas of the transformationalists accounted for language as a means of communication. Neither were functional. Nor were all the "contrastive studies" which the doctrines generated, since they compared or "contrasted" only the codes, independent of their use in context and divorced from the practices of the users of the languages being compared.

It was in fact the function of context which constituted one of the main differences between contrastive and differential linguistics. The basis for the study of differential linguistics has always been, not a comparative description of two codes, but bilingual samples of equivalent discourse in context, and contextual meanings as conveyed in two different languages. [30]

In sum, structural linguistics tried to describe the structures of languages; transformational grammar attempted to explain how some of these structures could generate specific sentences. Structural linguistics reached a dead end when its exponents tried to explain more than was possible without benefit of meaning; transformational grammar attained its impasse when its practitioners tried to explain meaning by ignoring context. Neither could explain the phenomenon of language within their limited conceptual framework. Practicing language teachers were among the first to notice that such theories could not solve their problems in the classroom; hence, their disillusionment with linguistics---pure or applied.

A few language teachers began to realize that they had become the confused and often captive audience of the trials and errors of exponents of a young discipline who were trying hard to appear scientific. What often happened was that before one basic problem was solved, linguistics concentrated on another unsolved problem in such a way that this study became fashionable. Those

still working on the other problem had then to operate outside the newly formed conceptual framework, which sometimes became identified with the science itself. Anyone not doing it was not doing linguistics. Those working within the fashionable framework, however, likewise tended to congregate around fashionable theories or methods. This, it may be argued, was only human. The trouble arose, however, when the theories became dogmas and the methods were accepted as doctrine. A language teacher who was not a member of the in-group of linguists was likely to be impressed by their claims to the extent of identifying them with the science of linguistics, without which one could not possibly claim to be a language teacher. Once language teachers became believers in a popular nostrum, what others, the non-believers, did or had done appeared either unimportant or erroneous. Instead of seeing language for the multi-faceted phenomenon which it was, these teachers began to believe that the magic formula to successful language teaching would be found in the specific and limited area of linguistics or psychology which was fashionable at the time.

One may be permitted to ask why some concern for context was not transmitted to language teachers along with the large doses of linguistics which were administered to so many of them. For the same reason that the people with the strongest voices are heard to the detriment of those who speak in quiet hesitation. The growing vogues of structural linguistics during the forties and fifties and its consciously promoted attempt to apply it to language teaching by obliging teachers to study the subject, resulted in the propagation of a belief that this so-called applied linguistics would solve all the problems of the language teacher. A language teacher could not obtain the results he desired unless he mastered the subject. The very mass of the production of books, articles, periodicals, courses, seminars, conferences and publicity had within two decades extended its influence throughout the Western World. The demise of the movement, however, had little to do with the dissatisfaction of the language teachers.

It was due to the fact not that structural linguistics ignored context, but that it did not explain how the structures became sentences. Many other gaps in the structuralist methods could have been singled out for study, but it so happened that some people put up a good argument for the importance of the transformations of basic structures into sentences as most worthy of study. Transformational grammar became the vogue of the post-war generation of linguistics, and the relative importance of structural linguistics as a subject of study proportionately decreased.

Experienced language teachers, however, had known all along that the application of structural linguistics and transformational grammar reduced language teaching to a formalism which was even more removed than the old methods, since it had little to offer on the facts of the language being taught. Some of the older grammars (like those of Jespersen and Kruisinga for English, for example) were far more complete, contextual, informative and usable---more pragmatic, as it were, than the laconic structural restatements made according to the dictum of the less said the better. The new structural and transformational grammars had simply restated their own selection of the known facts for the purpose of proving the theory, while often leaving out what could not be fitted into it.

Pragmalinguistics is supposed to make up for the lack of context in modern linguistics. For many experienced language teachers, contextualization is nothing new. For the long history of language teaching, common sense has from time to time penetrated the fog of dogma, in an attempt to establish a relationship between language learning and reality. This relationship is called for by the most basic principles of didactics as re-iterated by Comenius, Hobart and

most practical educators. It necessarily forms an integral part of any language lesson. [31] Other language teachers, revolting against linguistic theory and its application in the classroom through purely formal and iterative drilling, tended to make context the content of all language lessons. This was made possible through the mass production of audiovisual materials in the decades following the Second World War.

Advances in the technology of sound and picture reproduction made it possible to mass produce films and film strips, with accompanying sound that could be packaged into complete courses. The way this was done had a profound effect on the use of methods and techniques of language teaching---and on the use of context. Of the several options for using context, however, the producers chose the easiest and the least effective. They selected the context almost at random, created a dialogue around it, illustrated it in a sequence of pictures, recorded and photoreproduced the film strips and added some exercises. Some producers admittedly took the precaution of making sure that the dialogue was written in a basic vocabulary, but few took the trouble of making sure that the sequence of words and structures thus imposed was the optimal one. The total effect of this was the production of courses which taught discourse rather than language. So that, although the learners came out with the appropriate sentence for the situations taught, they did not develop the ability of independently generating sentences within that part of the system which they had supposedly assimilated.

Even the best of the audiovisual courses---some of them produced at great expense by government-financed development---seem to have done no better than the home-made variety. Both, however, did promote a different type of language learning---efficient within the few contexts covered, but incapable of leading beyond. What had been taught were sets of sentences learned in and dependent upon specific contexts, but not independently generated. The difference between these sentences and those of the pattern-drill or memorized dialogue types was that they had been taught within a context and had at least one sort of contextual meaning. This and the structural meaning and that of the components, in spite of the variations to be supplied by the teacher, was not learned sufficiently to enable the learner to generate very many different sentences independently, let alone maintain a conversation. It was as if pattern practice and contextualization had been mutually exclusive, which it is not. [32]

The materials, however, could theoretically have achieved this end if produced in sufficient variety and abundance and used for the same length of time as a child would be expected to in similar contexts in the home and in the community. But this was obviously impossible, since at the rate of the few hours a week devoted to the foreign language classes, it would have taken more than a lifetime to create as many contexts as the child had experiences before the age of eleven. And even if this had been possible, the rate of forgetting would have eliminated much of the learning. One answer to this dilemma was the intensive course. But such courses succeeded only in covering the same material in a more concentrated time-span---admittedly, with more learning efficiency. They had, however, been used as successful introduction to living in a foreign community, the multiple real contexts of which were then used for further learning through observation and imitation.

It is evident that, if a foreign language is to be learned in school in only a small fraction of the time in which it is learned in the context of reality, the materials and methods must not only possess all the properties of

such contexts but that the process must be very much more efficient and much less wasteful.

This realization was supplied not by an analysis of linguistic structure but by an inquiry into the nature of meaning. The semanticist, I.A. Richards, had suggested the theoretical basis for such an approach in the early forties by creating the concept of structural contextualization whereby the learning of the language (code) through discourse (sentences in context) would be the main activity of the language learner and the main pre-occupation of the teachers and method makers. The functional learning unit was not the phoneme, as had been claimed at the time, nor the sentence-pattern, on which pattern practice was based, nor the context alone, which later dominated most audiovisual language courses, but an all-integrated sentence-situation unit which was continually varied within corresponding contextual changes. It was through these variations that the learner would arrive at the structures and units of the language, the voluntary and independent use of which would permit one to generate unlearned sentences appropriate to new and different contexts.

The first beginnings would be based on the simplest and most available contexts and structures leading to more complex ones in a cumulating continuum, the gradation of which would constitute the optimal learning of language in context. What would make contextualization possible would be the use of specially designed semantic pictures, the sequence of which constituted a sort of pictorial semantics of the particular language, each picture-pattern and its variation having structural parallelism with a corresponding sentence and its variation. The making of materials along these lines was admittedly extremely difficult and time-consuming.

Whether it was this difficulty, or the fact that the theory was not fully elaborated, or that its arrival was at a time when phoneme-oriented structural linguistics was the raging fashion, or that it was first applied to the teaching of Basic English, with its world-language connotation, the fact remains that it was ignored by the majority of language teachers and had little follow-up.

Instead, language teaching lived through the pattern practice period, audio-lingual approaches, structural approaches and structuro-global audio-visualism. The latter purported to deal only with the standardized situations selected either directly by the method maker, or indirectly as the result of a sociolinguistic investigation. In either case, these "standardized situations" were arbitrary. What was involved was determined by the method, not by the situation, since the real social and personal elements were lacking. In this way, the medium became the method---of one may calque Marshall MacLuhan thus.

As a result, two contradictory tendencies held sway in the language teaching of the sixties and seventies both of which promoted the learning of erroneous utterances. The application of structural linguistics and generative grammar promoted errors of under-contextualization. The holistic audio-visual approach of structuro-globalism promoted errors due to over-contextualization. Under-contextualization produced utterances which were grammatically correct but unidiomatic in that they did not fit the situations in which they could be used. Over-contextualization tended to produce utterances which were idiomatic but inappropriate when used outside the context in which they were learned.

For some language teachers and parents, however, contextualization through pictures could only be artificial. For others, even the most efficient language teaching could not replace the social contexts in which languages had

always been successfully learned. They began to dispair of having the learners ever acquire a second language in language classes. For them, language could only be acquired in the context of its use. If a language was to be learned at all in school, it must be through its use in school situations, particularly in the learning of subjects through the second language. It was observed that one of the reasons why children learn languages better and quicker in the street than in the classroom is that they do so through natural contexts. [33]

The primacy of context was perhaps the main reason why children become bilingual in the home. [34] The growing literature of case studies of this is a cumulation of evidence indicating the ease and rapidity with which children master a second language in the context of the family, even though the learning process may be in itself haphazard and inefficient. [35]

The second revolt away from linguistics in language teaching was therefore in the direction of bilingual schooling. [36] It was noted that the learning of a second language in context was one of the reasons why children succeeded in becoming bilingual by attending binational schools such as, for example, the one in Berlin [37] Because such schools could be structured in such a way as to provide a meeting place for two communities, the context was wider than it could be in the purely immersion type of bilingual schooling where the pupils came from unilingual homes of the same language community and only the teacher was bilingual---or unilingual in the other language. [38] Yet, immersion schooling was the best possible formula for some unicultural communities. An even wider social context became possible where the two communities constituted the focal point to two larger continuous civilizations of comparable culture, size and strength, such as, for example, the Hispanic and the Anglo-American. [39]

There was also evidence however that a child, having left the bilingual context, could forget the second language just as easily and rapidly, especially if neither the school nor the community support it. [40]

Interest of the early seventies in the pragmatics of language, therefore, is not the direct outcome of the work of pragmatic philosophers but a revolt against the neglect of the users and uses of language which was characteristic of the fashionable language theories of the fifties and the sixties. Linguists and particularly language teachers had gathered sufficient evidence---and courage---to protest that context could not be brushed aside as being merely "trivial".

Although the arrival of pragmatic linguistics was welcome, it too is fraught with dangers for the practicing teacher. The main danger is that it should become abstract and theoretically oriented with supposedly universal applicable situational categories. [41] A second danger is that it should induce teachers to neglect the fundamentals of language acquisition, that is, the capacity to produce independently a maximum number of sentences with a minimum number of elements. A third danger is that it should become exclusive, that it be considered an alleged single remedy for all language teaching problems as the same sort of nostrum, or fad, as had other language theories---rather than as critical re-orientation of priorities. Finally, there is the danger that pragmatic disciplines use language teachers as dependent consumers. Until language teachers and their trainers can thus distinguish the dangers from the opportunities, and free themselves from subservience to other disciplines, no autonomous study of language teaching and learning can evolve.

NOTES

1 Contrariwise, pragmatists have used such terms as *metalinguistics* and *metalanguage* to refer to language about language, which could include most of linguistics

2 Ogden & Richards 1923

3 Halliday 1975: 74

4 Haberland & Mey 1977. If linguistic pragmatics embraces linguistics, that is, language about language, it would seem to integrate both meanings of *metalinguistics*, that of the structuralists and that of the logicians.

5 A representative sampling of the writings of Peirce, James, Lewis, Mead and others may be seen in Thayer's anthology (1970). A useful survey of the movement, with an accompanying bibliography, is Thayer's *Meaning and Action* (1968).

6 Morris 1946

7 Carnap 1934

8 A survey of contemporary pragmatics as it relates to linguistics has been made by Brigitte Schlieben-Lange (1975). It covers the history and the development of pragmatics during this century and points out the differences in schools and approaches, with particular reference to the thinking of Jürgen Habermas (1968). See also the two volumes edited by Siegfried Schmidt (1977).

9 Quine 1960

10 Wittgenstein 1960

11 Mackey 1972*b*

12 For a justification of this, see Albert Einstein's article on the genesis of scientific language (Einstein 1965).

13 Most references to the various words for snow in Eskimo are based, not on any special study of this semantic field in the various dialects of the language, but simply on dictionary equivalents. That is why Whorf and other anthropological linguists cite only three of four words (Mackey 1972*b*).

14 Mackey (in press)

15 Although the authors of the cross-cultural semantic atlas seem to be interested in what cultures have in common, their research is most revealing in exposing the differences (Osgood 1962). In the symposium on the cross-cultural generality of affective meaning systems which I attended in Iran in 1967, there were papers on such topics as the meaning and function of work contexts in different cultures (Jakobovits 1967). Some of this meaning, of course, is also conveyed through non-verbal behaviour, the function of which has been studied by Hall (1968 & 1969) and Watson (1970).

16 Searle 1969. Attempts have been made by Ure (1969), Chiu (1977) and others to describe and measure specific registers. For a critique of Searle and Austin, see Henne (1975).

17 Gregory 1967

18 Brown & Gilman 1960

19 Strevens 1965: 85

10 Joos 1962

21 Mackey 1976*b*

22 Mackey 1972*c*

23 Mackey & Savard

24 Mackey 1963

25 Haberland & Mey 1977

26 Saussure 1915: 125-127

27 Mackey 1970

28 Bar-Hillel 1971

29 After a quarter of a century and hundreds of books, articles and conferences on applied linguistics in language teaching, there seems to have been little, if any, betterment of language learning. There is still no proof that any alleged improvement in the quality or quantity of language learning in the classroom is attributable to the application of linguistics by the language teacher. There seems, however, to be some evidence to the contrary: language analysis may inhibit language learning (Mackey 1963).

30 The difference between contrastive and differential linguistics may be illustrated by comparing Di Pietro's survey (1971) with such examples as Vinay & Darbelnet 1958 and Malblanc 1961.

31 Mackey 1965: Part III

32 Mackey (I.S.) 1967

33 Mackey 1976*a*: Part II

34 Mackey (I.S.) 1977

35 Afendras & Pianarosa 1975

36 Mackey & Ornstein 1977

37 Mackey 1972*a*

38 Lambert & Tucker 1972

39 Mackey & Beebe 1977

40 Mackey & Anderson 1977. For

41 For a discussion of the theoretical status of situational models, see Bayer (1977).

The exclusion of universal theoretical models of pragmatics does not mean that contexts must be eliminated in the use of quantitative methods in the comparison of languages. For examples of such methods, see Mackey (1971, 1974 and 1976*a*: Part II)

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ABSTRACT

The natural process of learning language is to concentrate on what we mean, not only on how we are saying it. What we mean is dependent upon the context in which we speak. This context in turn depends on the society or the speech-community in which our speech act takes place. To be a member of a speech community is to know what language behavior fits what situation. In this sense, language is essentially a function of society, and each society has the language it needs in order to function. If sociolinguistics has to refer to people and to their use of language, it cannot be divorced from linguistics or be studied as an autonomous science. The abstraction of sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and even pragmatics from language as people speak it has hampered the development of effective second language teaching methods. (Author/JB)

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William F.Mackey

The Contextual Revolt in Language Teaching: Its Theoretical Foundations

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W.F.M.

The history of language teaching has been one of vacillating trends fueled largely by the changing theories of psychology, linguistics and education. During the first half of this century, language teaching has in turn been identified with the application of phonetics (the oral approach), of association psychology (the direct method), of structural linguistics (contrastive analysis and the audiolingual approach.)

During the forties, fifties and sixties it became fashionable to identify language teaching with applied linguistics with a consequent emphasis on the formal aspects of language. Pattern-practice and structural drills were the main activities of the language teacher.

In the late sixties and early seventies, however, there has been a revolt against this formalism, which had not accounted for the contextual reality of language. This reaction could be seen in the growing popularity of context-oriented audiovisual courses and the drift to the more radical solutions provided by the immersion and other forms of bilingual schooling. The theoretical foundation which was eventually placed under this movement and justified its existence became known as pragmalinguistics.

Pragmalinguists is simply a new word for an old concern. It is also known as *pragmatic linguistics, linguistic pragmatics* and, more simply, *pragmatics*. There are other names which depend on the field or doctrine referring to the phenomenon. In the field of language didactics, it has been known as contextualization. Structuralists excluded it as belonging to what they considered had nothing to do with linguistics. Studies involving cultural (Whorf & Sapir) and other contexts were put under metalinguistics.[1] Basically, all these terms refer to the study of language in context, and this concern is as old as the study of human language and of the thought behind it.

The bond between language and the context of its use has been stressed by most thinkers who have pondered the problem of human intercommunication---Plato and Artistotle, Kant, Locke, Mill and Wittgenstein---to name only these philosophers. Ethnologists like Malinowski have theorized on the inseparable link that normally exists between speech and its context. In sum, most sciences that have been concerned with man have had to face the problem of changes in the context in which he speaks.

At the beginning of the century, context was proclaimed to be the very basis of all understanding. In the contextual theory of meaning associated with the names of I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden, the structures and words which made up language were simply pawns the semantic value of which continually changed according to the contexts in which they were used [2]. This changing value of the basic

elements of each language was also recognized by linguists like Saussure, Bally and Firth. Most linguistics, however, chose to exclude context from their science, so that those who took context into account were said to be doing pragmatics, pragmatic linguistics, or more recently, pragmalinguistics.

All such appelations contain the denotation of practice which derives from the same source, πραλμα, the original Greek etymon for action. Etymologically, therefore, these terms could be rephrased as "the language of practice", "the linguistics of the practical", "the study of the language which is actually used", "the analysis of the practical consequences of speech". Yet, this meaning of *pragmatic* has long been obsolete in English; but not, however, in German where its homologue, *pragmatisch* has been used since the late sixteenth century. In the intervening time, the meaning of English *pragmatic* has evolved from "practical" to "methodical", to "shrewd", to "dogmatic and doctrinaire". It is with this latter meaning that English writers of Jonathan Swift's generation used the term, e.g. "pragmatic and overweening".

By the mid-nineteenth century, *pragmatism* had become synonymous with pedantry. That was the time, it will be remembered, when the new science of etymology began to flourish, and academics began to appropriate Greek etymons into technical terms which were then entering most European languages at an ever increasing rate. Historians, it seems, were the first to use the term *pragmatic* in a restricted and technical sense---referring to the causes, consequences and practical lessons of history. But it was philosophers who popularized the term when they began using it, at the turn of the century, for the idea that the meaning of a concept is its practical consequences. Later, and all through this century, logicians, social scientists and even the general public incorporated derivatives of the term in their respective vocabularies. For reasons which will be stated later, students of language have been late-comers in the re-appropriation of the etymon. In the study of language acquisition, the term *pragmatic* has been applied to the first phase of infant speech, the instrumental, regulatory and interactional. [3]

The term *pragmalinguistics* seems to intend a link with the linguistic sciences instead of with the more general theory of language which is often referred to as *semiotics*, a branch of which is called *pragmatics*, the study of the relationship between language, its users and its uses. Yet, *pragmatic linguistics* has been defined as "the science of language use", "the study of the conditions that govern the use of language", "the study of the concrete practice of language with regards to the actual use and users", "the study of the concrete conditions in which language users use language", "the study of the necessary conditions that govern the use of language". Likewise, *linguistic pragmatics* has been defined as the "study of the conditions that determine discourse and understanding between people using what they consider to be the same language" (an inquiry into the constitutive conditions of the human dialogue), being a theory of language as human activity, in the final analysis, a theory of speech. Another meaning of the term would englobe not only the study of the users and uses of speech, but that of the users and uses of linguistics as well. [4]

All these terms have much in common. On the one hand, they relate to the practical; on the other hand, each within its own family of theories, is associated with the philosophy of the practical whereby the value of any idea depends on how it works out in reality. This attitude toward ideas is indeed as old as philosophy. In every generation, it has been proclaimed by thinkers who revolted against the dominance of dogma, the primacy of abstract principle and the confinement of closed systems in the governance of the affairs of mankind. It will be recalled that Emmanual Kant was one of the first to use the etymon in reference

to a system of thought based on experience rather than on dogma. He qualified this type of thought as *pragmatisch*, by which he meant experimental or empirical. The pragmatic criterion of experience became central to the thinking of other philosophers like George Berkeley, John Stuart Mill and of a whole line of Scottish thinkers who practiced a philosophy of common sense. The elaboration of this criterion into a separate philosophy, or school of thought, however, was the work of two American thinkers---William James and Charles S. Peirce. For James, the purpose of thought was the establishment of relationships, of links with our environment, and meaning was the use of ideas for purposes of action.

It is the work of Peirce, however, that is most relevant to the language sciences, since he considered his work as part of a more comprehensive theory of language and thought. His pragmatism is essentially a theory of meaning. It is a study of the relationship between language and other signs with the purpose of clarifying their meaning. In its primary form, this relationship may be stated thus: If something is said by someone in this situation, others will probably react thus. This constitutes Peirce's theory of meaning which, simply stated, says "If this is done, this will happen" or"If you say this in this situation, this is what people will think you mean". The dialectic therefore is essentially conditional.

Some thinkers, however, go beyond this and include the question, "Why was this done, or said?" in addition to "What effects did it have?" For observation of the effects may oblige a re-interpretation of the intentions. This might presuppose a social structure in which speakers live and a study of the kind of forms of interactive language behaviour of which different cultures are capable. How universal are these and how characteristic are they of man as a species?

The very emergence of man as a species is attributable to his discovery and use of language as a system of significant symbols which permitted him to conceive his environment and eventually to control it. Some pragmatic philosophers, like Royce, Lewis and Mead, have made this use of language basic to their philosophy. [5]

As pragmatic philosophy developed, it became more and more concerned with language and its uses. It also became more formal and logical in the works of thinkers like Charles Morris who theorized on the relationships between signs, language and behaviour. [6] For Morris, pragmatics was the theory of sign relations. He attempted to formulate the theory as a set of rigourously stated rules. These rules gave "the conditions in the interpreters (of the language sign) under which the sign vehicle is a sign". In the tradition of Rudolf Carnap and the Vienna Circle, the study of these conditions was quite separate from that of syntax and grammar, which was also to be governed by rules. [7] If an investigation made explicit reference to the speaker or to the user of a language, then it was assigned to the field of pragmatics. Pragmatics was defined as the study of sign systems with respect to user relations. [8]

Later, logicians, like W.V. Quine, developed as a major concern the establishment of formal pragmatic relationships between words and things, and the purely arbitrary boundaries between so-called scientific categories and disciplines which originally had been based on some contingent or practical criteria. [9] In this spirit, Ludwig Wittgenstein went back to the analysis of everyday sentences to discover the relationship between language and logic. [10]

In sum, pragmatic philosophers have had a wider view of language than linguistics have had, and as such, they have, unlike most linguistics, taken the context of reality into account, while also inquiring into both the meaning of language and its necessity. One could argue therefore that it is not pragmatics that is a branch of modern linguistics, but rather linguistics which is part of

pragmatics. For, if context is basic to all language and thought, pragmatics cannot simply be an extra component or complement to such conceptual systems as structural linguistics or transformational generative grammar. In the present state of our knowledge of language, and of the disciplines which study it, the appropriate place for pragmatics is that of a concern which must be central to the study of language, one on which other concerns like grammar, phonetics and lexicology can be based.

There are two types of pragmatic theories, one based on the code, the sign system, the language as such, on what has been known as *langue*; the other, based on the message, the utterance, speech, or what is known as discourse (i.e. *parole*). The first of these types reveals a tendency to elaborate universal theoretical models of language; the second may reveal either theoretical or practical tendencies, that is, either speech-act theory or, pragmatically true to form, the production of solutions for language teachers, translators and others, to the practical problems posed by the use and users of language in context.

There are several sorts of theoretical pragmatics and of pragmatic pragmatics, if one may use such an expression, both of which represent dangers for the language teacher (see below). The theoretical pragmatics is autonomous; its validity remains to be justified. In as much as one of the theories of pragmatics becomes a closed system or a fixed doctrine, it deviates from the pragmatic approach the aim of which has always been to do away with such restrictions. It is important for practicioners like language teachers not to be carried away by any one-sided doctrine---pragmatic though it may claim to be. For the use of language is ever evolving and may defy definitive systematization; language is also the most complex skill that man has mastered.

Any pragmatics that conforms to the everyday reality which language teachers know, must be part of the big picture of language as the essential fabric of human environment. No matter how attractive a new language theory may seem, it is important that it take into account this basic reality of language.

It must not discount the fact that all creatures, including man, must live in some sort of environment. In order to exist in this environment, people must devise ways of dealing with it, since they may both be affected by it and have an effect upon it. The environment of man is varied and changeable; to deal with it, he has evolved a traditional guide to behaviour, which includes what he eats and wears, how he gets his food and clothing, the tools and techniques he uses, his relationships with others and the institutions, customs, laws and beliefs which enable him to work with his fellows. This guide to behaviour, enabling man to deal with his environment, and all it includes, is largely acquired and retained through traditional conceptual categories, most of which may be transmitted through language. The language provides the acoustic or visual forms through which categories are coded for use in communication. It is through the language that one can get at a conceptual category, which is simply one of many possible ways of arbitrarily grouping objects, events and other phenomena so that one can think and talk about them. [11]

These conceptual categories (or concepts) are coded in the vocabulary, in the nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and other form-classes of each language; they cover everything that man can see, feel and imagine. Many of the words in a language are labels for categories of notions, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, relationships and judgments which have no direct counterpart in the physical world. Although the categories of non-physical phenomena may be as indicative as anything else of the differences between various cultures (or guides to mental and physical behaviour), they are hardly the best type of concepts to be used initially in the study of such relations. One must begin with the concrete, or the

concrete word which bears the closest relation between the word and the thing. Such concepts of the concrete, which are first-level abstractions from reality have become associated with elements of particular languages, not only nouns, but other words, word-groups, sentences, endings and intonations, so that they begin to stand for these concepts within the culture or community where they are used---as truly as a coin or other piece of currency stands for what it can buy.

These elements of language were called upon to stand for more and more as the culture of the users increased in complexity. It becomes more efficient to deal with some concept in groups and groupings of groups, until high levels of abstractions are reached at which simple words become far removed from the reality for which they once stood. Where the element of language, which is really a symbol (S) of something, stood for a simple conceptual category (C), it now, in addition to this, stands for much more. From ($S_1 = C_1$) to ($S_1 = C_1 + C_2 + C_3$). In addition to this removal of a direct link with sensation through the development of abstract meanings, a language sign may be used to stand for several of these concepts---some of which are quite unrelated. Furthermore, the same elements of language, the linguistic symbol, may be used to stand for other elements of language and their corresponding meanings ($S_3 = S_1 + S_2$). At this stage, the language has become an instrument of highly abstract thought. Because it is by now far removed from the self-correcting contexts of reality, this use of the simple elements of language actually promotes misunderstanding, ambiguity and error in human intercommunication; for no two people possess the same set of concrete impressions upon which some of the abstractions are supposed to be based. At the more basic and practical level of language use, however, these impressions and their corresponding linguistic associations are self-normalizing, for, in order to function, they must have enough in common and their inter-relationships must be stable enough to operate within the context in which they are used.

Just as the forms, meanings and conventions of a language are transmitted from one generation to the next, the language of each community of sign users is the product of the cultures which has used it. If meaning is the product of the past, it is also indebted to the future. The more abstract elements of the language, however, are free from this community bondage. They become instruments of abstract thinking---self-contained systems enabling speakers and writers to communicate to listeners and readers in all quarters of the globe. Yet, because of the necessary ambiguity of all natural language, philosophers and scientists have used it only as a basis for further abstraction, creating and using the seemingly context-free artificial codes of mathematics and symbolic logic. [12] This enables users of many different natural languages to communicate in the same fashion within a restricted area of abstract thought in a way which otherwise would be impossible. For no two natural languages use these abstractions in the same way. What is grammar in one language is vocabulary in another. What is coded in one language may be uncoded in another. One language may see nothing special in a situation; another may cover it with a fixed expression or sentence.

Where one language may respond grammatically to a change in context, another may do so by altering a word or even by calling for an entirely different sentence. Where the same change of context may affect a single word in one language, it may call for the formulation of an entirely different sentence in another language. If the English *Hello, Mr. Martin* is equivalent to the French *Bonjour, Monsieur,* it does not hold that, *Hello, stranger* can be rendered as,

Bonjour l'étranger. French requires a different approach to the situation as expressed in the sentence. *On ne vous voit plus.*

Contrariwise, when the speaker may have to change the sentence when speaking one language, he may simply have to change a tone when speaking the other language. In the context of place, for example, *I just work here* is equivalent in French to *Je ne travaille qu'ici.* Changing the context to one of person (status) requires but a change of stress in English *I just work here*; in French, it calls for an entirely different sentence *Ce n'est pas moi qui commande.* Or the change may create a multiple meaning, calling for different sentences in the other language, the choice depending on the context. A change in tone in English may call for a different sentence in French.

That will be the day. / *Ce sera le jour*

That will be the day. (seldom) / *Ce n'est pas pour demain.*

That will be the day. (never) / *Quand les poules auront des dents.*

The fact, however, that a change in context may call for different sentences in the other language does not necessarily imply that each of these has a different meaning. For example:

Don't mention it. / *N'en parlez pas.*

Changing the context to that of a response to a *Thank you very much.*

/ *De rien.*
Don't mention it. / *Il n'y a pas de quoi.*
/ *Je vous en prie.*

The options may depend on the dialect, or they may be synonymous within one, some or all the dialects of the same language.

/ *Don't mention it.* (U.K.)
/ *Not at all.* (U.K.)
De rien. / *You're welcome.* (U.S.)
/ *Uh, Uh.* (U.S.)
/ [zero]. (i.e. silence) U.K. & U.S.)

In sum, different languages react differently to changes in different types of context. Yet, each language is the prisoner of the wider context in which it is used, that is, the context of culture, within which the entire hierarchy of all other contexts can have meaning---verbal and non-verbal.

Functioning within the context of culture are the contexts of communication, which include the contexts of situation, within which the contexts of words have their meanings.

Since languages are both the products and the constituents of cultures, different cultures will make use of the elements of language in a different way, selecting what is important for the culture and ignoring the rest. Some cultures may represent one area of the physical environment by making numerous functional distinctions in the concept categories and the language elements standing for them. Others may make few such distinctions. Most languages, for example, seem to possess conceptual categories for the three forms of life's most basic and important substance---water (solid, liquid and gas). But not all have the same type and number of such categories. For the solid form, most

European languages distinguish only between ice and snow. Languages traditionally used in arctic environments, however, distinguish more types in their code. In Baffin Land, in 1968, this writer was able to identify twenty-one distinctly different words for types of snow and ice, some words requiring long sentences to translate into a European language. [13] Snow and ice phenomena represent richer conceptual categories in Baffin Eskimo than they do in English, and these are more highly coded. It would seem, therefore, that conceptual categories, as manifested in the code of the language, might be used as an indication of the importance which the phenomena they represent may have in the environment of the people traditionally using that language.

How many such areas are as culturally universal as water? Food, clothing, weather, shelter, kinship, play, and how many more? In order to study differences in the context of culture, we should have to discover the extent of universality of extra-linguistic categories on which situations oblige people to communicate by means of language.

We can postulate that all human beings have a body and that all parts of the body, though segmented differently by different languages, are essentially the same. Likewise, we can assume that all beings must eat in order to keep alive (food), that they must sleep and protect themselves from the elements (shelter and clothing). They are all affected by the elements and must consequently have some conception of weather. [14] But how far can one continue along these lines without running into more and more cultural exceptions as the list gets longer. We may find, for example, that not all people possess modes of transportation, habits of smoking, or of mailing letters.

In other words, what we need from a science that claims to include the study of context at this level is not *a priori* generalizations about universality, but attested degrees of generality of the semantic fields in which language-bound situations occur in the context of communication. This could include measures of the cultural diversity and generality of affective meaning systems. It can also include the type of non-verbal communicative behaviour that is expected in different contexts. This varies from culture to culture. [15] It is within this context of a specific culture that the other contexts of communication, of situation and of words can have meaning.

The context of communication can be summed up as answers to questions of *what*, *why* and *how*, while the context of situation specifies the *who*, *where* and *when* of discourse.

The question of *what* is being communicated has pre-occupied a generation of researchers into languages for special uses, register variants, specialized vocabularies and technical styles. If one is writing about sailing, for example, one will use expressions and words quite different from what one would use if writing about law. A conversation with a neighbour comes into a different linguistic context than a discussion with a specialist in one's own field. Studies of the grammatical and lexical content of different fields are now being made through the use of exact and quantitative methods.

Secondly, the question of *why* is likely to affect the contexts of any communication. The real purpose of the communication may be more varied than is first apparent. It may be to persuade, to entertain, to inspire, or simply to inform; or it may be some combination of all these. It may be unwittingly for some expected phatic communion, as is evident in the offering of condolence, everyday greetings and cocktail party banter. Effects of variations in the purposes of communications have been studied in association with discourse analysis and speech act theory. Searle and Austin have specified the conditions attendant

upon acts of promising, advising, warning, greeting, congratulating, and so on, as a set of relationships between what is said and what is done. [16]

Thirdly, *how* the communication is made may involve the written or the spoken word---or both. The spoken word may include conversation, reading aloud, play acting, and the like, while the written word includes many genres like reports, memos, letters, briefs, novels, poems, testaments, minutes, resolutions and many others. Attempts to systematize the linguistic implications of these various modes of communication have been undertaken only in the past decade. [17]

Within these contexts of the *what, why* and *how* of specific acts of discourse, the situations in which the actual communication takes place may vary according to *who* is involved, *when* and *where* the speech act occurs. In other words, the contexts of situation include the contexts of *person*, of *time* and of *place*.

The context of *person* varies both according to the role-relation and the attitude relation, that is, who's who and how they feel about it. Both the diversity and the intensity of these relations vary greatly from language to language. Take for example the range of subtleties in interpersonal role and attitudinal relations which one must select when ending a letter in French: *Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les plus distingués. Croyez, cher collègue, à l'assurance de mon entière collaboration. Je vous prie de recevoir, cher ami, mes salutations les plus cordiales.* and dozens of other fixed phrases and permutations thereof. When ending comparable letters in English, the choice is much smaller and less complex---*Yours truly, yours sincerely, or cordially yours*.

The tone and implied relationships of the ending must not conflict with the form of address at the beginning. Nor must its implication be assumed to be equivalent from one language to the next. Where English *Dear Paul* might range from intimacy to mere acquaintance, the French *Cher Paul* would be restricted to intimacy; and its mistaken use might offend even a friend of long standing who had not expected more than the cordiality of *Cher Monsieur*, instead of the more formal *Monsieur*, which, in the same formal context, might appear in English as *Dear Mr. Martin*. Any calque on this in French *(Cher Monsieur Martin)* could be both contextually and linguistically offensive since in France such a form is excluded from the accepted options of epistolary style. Likewise, the more intimate *Cher ami* cannot be used in the same contexts as *Dear Friend*, which is now almost restricted to the impersonality of circular letters. The type of language behaviour expected between one person and another is not restricted to pronouns of address. Some languages have strict rules of how people in different social roles should address one another---son to father, student to teacher, inferior to superior. Such considerations have now become the object of research. [18]

Less is known, however, about contexts of attitudinal relationships as they affect usage in different languages. The intimate *Up you go, chaps* might thus be formalized as *Visitors should go upstairs at once*. [19] Although, on the basis of English alone, some categorization has been attempted; categories such as "frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate" have, for example, been proposed. [20]

The trouble with such *a priori* classifications---as with many of the illusions of the conflicting schools of linguistics---is that one is never quite sure which schemes of categorization, if any, belong to a given language and which categories exist only in the minds of the linguists who have thought them up. Little harm is done perhaps as long as such schemes are treated as games.

The danger is in their application. By assuming that all languages have the same number of categories, some linguists try to find them, and them only, in each of the languages which they attempt to describe. Even, however, if one assumes that a particular scheme applies only to one language, there is the further danger of trying to mould the facts of that language to fit the categories of the theory. As a case in point, let us examine the following specimen of language in context taken from a modern English novel. How do the five above categories account for the use of the italicized sentences each of which is intended to convey the same message but at different levels of speech?

The context is that of a scholastic agency in London. Leonard has just been interviewed by Dr. Stack, the headmaster of a grammar school in the South of England. After the interview, Leonard is told to check with the clerk on his way out and report on the results.

> "Leonard was endeavouring to formulate the results of his parley with Dr. Stack. *'I've got the job.'*---No, that would do for at home. *'I've been taken on.'* Sounded like a dock-labourer. *'I've been engaged.'* ---That was not quite the thing either. The clerk came to his rescue, and made further verbal experiments unnessary. *'Did Dr. Stack offer you the post?* What figure did he mention?'"
> (Paul Hehrer, *Schooling*. London: Jarrolds 1927, pp. 20-21)

From this exercise in categorizing levels of speech, one can conclude either that English must be using more than five clocks or that those which it allegedly has are not telling the right time.

Secondly, there is the context of *place*. Where something is said is also part of the context of situation. Some languages have expressions that are expected to be used only in certain places. While in English *Here's Paul now* may be used anywhere that Paul happens to be, including beside the phone, in French *Je vous passe Paul* is restricted to the telephone. Likewise, the English sign *Do not enter* may be used for places like buildings, rooms and streets, Which French expression is equivalent depends on the place. While buildings and rooms may be labeled *Défense d'entrer*, the same interdiction at the entrance of a street would require *Sens interdit*. Certain sentences are so place-dependent that their utterance alone is enough to evoke the place in which they are spoken. In French, the word *saignant* may well be used for the English *bloody*, but as a sentence *(Saignant)* evokes a response, and a specific thing (rare meat) and a place (at table).

Thirdly, *time* is often a crucial component of the context of situation. The time at which something is said or not said may be heavy with social implications. When to greet, what to say before entering, when leaving, in the morning, on New Year's Day---all these vary greatly from one language to another. Times at which certain speech acts are expected in different cultures, whether or not they are compulsory or optional and the meaning of related alternatives are important for anyone learning a foreign language. Whereas the English may start a meal in silence, the French and Japanese are expected to say something. It is not surprising that the French *Bon appétit* and the German *Mahlzeit* have no English equivalent. Yet, the options and the implications of what is said may vary from one language to another. The French *Bon appétit* does not include the same options and implications as does the Japanese *Dozo meshi-agatte kudasai* (Please do eat) and the obligatory response *Itadakimasu* (Thank you, I will).

What makes generalization difficult even within the same language is that there are few pure cultures. Even for French, one of the most standardized languages in the world, the situations in which language is used are far from iden-

tical in all parts of the French-speaking world. [21] In some areas, the *Bon appétit* is rarely used. But what renders investigations into this type of language behaviour even more complex is that many languages coexist with other dialects and languages, and speakers are influenced by them; conflicting conventions may sometimes cause both embarrassment and confusion. [22] Although all situations must necessarily include person, place and time, they may or may not include a context of action or reference to action. Some expressions in the language are thus bound or limited to certain action contexts. For example, the English sentence *He rolls his own* can only refer to the action of making cigarettes and has no French equivalent. To render it into French, therefore, the action must be specified in such sentences as *Il fait lui-même ses cigarettes.*

Contexts of action, place, person and time, however, are not mutually exclusive. *Travaux* as a road sign in French is interpreted as meaning that there are people ahead working on the road. In English, the same situation calls for some verbal specification, either adding reference to the context of person *(Men at work)* or to the context of place *(Construction ahead)*---or both. One cannot, however, on the basis of isolated examples generalize that some languages are more specific than others in their allusion to context: that English, for example, is more specific than French. In some cases, it will be the converse. The English sentence *You know the moves* referring to someone's expertise, experience or canniness, is an allusion to chess. In French, the context of the allusion requires to be specified in this case. *(Vous connaissez la marche des pièces)*

Many possible values of a word or expression become specific in the context of situation. Where there is no situation, it is possible that some language signs---even the most common, like *is*, will not mean the same things to everybody. (e.g. *Beauty is truth. Language is structure.*) It is in this sense that words do not mean; people do.

Although the basic relations in language are those that exist between linguistic forms and the extra-linguistic settings in the contexts of situation and communication and culture, the most operable relations are those that are found between the elements themselves as they change values according to the context of other elements with which they associate. Ignorance of the effects of this type of verbal context has even resulted in lost opportunities and lost battles. It is recounted that a joint British-French operation in the First World War would have failed if the French liaison officer (François Boillot) had not corrected the error of a subordinate who mistook the meaning of the word *find* in the operations order stating that "The French troops will find their own guides". Since the word *find* implied that the contingent was to supply guides for itself (cf. the expression *all found*), the French troops did not find or meet those they expected.

Words are not the only components of verbal contexts. There are also word-groups, word endings, word-order, stress, intonation and tempo. And each of these formal components may change any type of referent---person, place, thing, attitude, relationship. But each possible referent cannot have its own word. If there were a different word for all the things we wished to talk about, their very number would make it impossible to talk. What makes language possible is the functional and contextual polysemy of its components. The same language sign may take on a number of referents and families of referents according to its function within a structure. The word *round* may function as a noun, an adjective, a preposition, a verb, or an adverb. Likewise, a *fast* is a noun,

to fast (verb), a *fast* car (adjective) and run *fast* (adverb).

Even this, however, is not sufficient. Half a million words is not enough to express all the meanings of people who have used the English language. Many of these words must have several referents; in fact, some of them have hundreds of different meanings. For example, the word *run* as listed in the OED, has more than four hundred. One can discover these different meanings only through the context of the words with which *run* is used. The presence of other words like *to* and *for* will change the meaning. *Run to the office of a friend* is not like *Run for the office of alderman* as becomes evident when the word is rendered into another language, in French for example, *partir à la course*, as opposed to *présenter sa candidature*. Or, *conduire une auto* (run a car) *qui ne fonctionne pas* (doesn't run). All of which is unrelated to the meaning of the word in the sentence *These colours don't run* (i.e. *fast* colours)/ *Garanti bon teint* in French. And so it is with many of the four hundred or so other meanings of the word *run* in its various collocations.

To put it differently, *run* has an ambiguity potential of about 400, which can be used as one of the indices of semantic coverage. [23] What reduces this, is the linguistic context in which the word is used. Colours cannot obviously run in the same sense as people can. Nor can cars, although both people and cars can run fast. So, we put in the meaning that fits best.

No two languages are likely to group such referents in the same way. The hundreds of meanings of run in English are not those of its usual French equivalent, *courir*. Compare:

Run a car	/	*Conduire une auto*
Run away	/	*Partir à la course*
Run for election	/	*Présenter sa candidature*
Run a shop	/	*Tenir un magasin*

The meaning of each word or other element is not only affected by those with which it occurs; it also has an effect upon them. Linking *run* with *fast* gives a meaning to *fast* quite different from what it would be if the same word were linked with *stand*, for example. *Run fast* implies movement; *stand fast*, implies the opposite. A foreign language learner having learned to associate *fast* with rapid movement may be understandably perplexed when required to associate the same word with complete immobility---or with the explanation that *fast* colours are the kind that don't *run*. Unless, of course, he has learned both meanings in the context of their use.

Even with the aid of verbal context, however, there is room for much ambiguity. It is the situational context that helps to reduce this. In the transmission and understanding of meaning, all these contexts act and interact at once. Therefore, to explain the phenomenon of language or to describe its function by separating context from form and form from meaning is to falsify reality. Yet, this is what most linguists have done. One of the notable exceptions, however, has been the linguistics of Firth and his disciples, for whom context is central to any description of a language. Linguists, in general, have either left the study of context to others, or they have ignored its existence. The structuralism of Saussure was intended as part of a more general science of signs in society. Others who have admitted the possible effects of context have relegated it to other disciplines like philology, semantics, or pragmatics. Yet, the linguistics of the descriptivists and of the transformation generative grammarians, though ignoring context, came to be regarded as the be-all and end-all of language analysis. [24]

Separating pragmatics from other linguistics, or vice versa, is to assume that a system of language signs can be meaningful if not used, that one can study meaning as divorced from language, and that we can analyse the value of signs as distinct from their usage. But in reality, this value is actually set by usage which governs what people say in order to mean. Indeed, this is what language learning is all about. The natural process of learning language is to concentrate on what we mean, not only on how we are saying it. The more we get interested in what we say the less attention we pay to the way we are saying it. What we mean is dependent upon the context in which we speak. And this context in turn depends on the society or the speech-community in which our speech-act takes place. To be a member of a speech community is to know what language behaviour fits what situation. In this sense, language is essentially a function of society. And each society has the language it needs in order to function. If linguistics includes the study of context, of the uses and users of language, it must include the analysis of language in society. Otherwise, it becomes either redundant or non-linguistic. It becomes redundant since there are no speech-acts not founded in society. Society is composed of people, that is, of users of language. If sociolinguistics (the study of language in society) has to refer to these people and to their use of language, it cannot be divorced from linguistic or be studied as an autonomous science. Yet, sociolinguistics was created when sociologists began to inquire into the function of language in society. It was defined as "what sociologists say when they talk about language". But it also includes what they do with language when they use it as an indicator of social status or social activity, group allegiance and the like.

Likewise, psycholinguistics has been one of the concerns of psychologists who have used language indicators as cloudy windows through which to view the workings of the mind. Logicians have also used language as indicators of thought.

In as much as it has to do with the users and uses of language, "applied linguistics" is likewise redundant as a separate discipline. For, pragmatically, there can be no distinction between "applied" and "pure" linguistics, since the theoretical problems of a language are inseparable from its real problems. Making pragmatics part of linguistics, therefore, neutralized this distinction between pure and applied linguistics. The maintenance of this arbitrary distinction becomes harmful to both---driving the pure to ponder the meaningless and the applied to study the trivial.

If pragmatics includes the basic laws governing human social behaviour, pragmatic linguistics, it is argued, would include the social conditions related to the practice of the "production and consumption of language". These are the same conditions of society---conditions which any human science must take into account. "No single aspect of linguistics can be divorced from human societal practice." [25] Consequently, there can be only one linguistics.

Why then are there so many? It is because certain people at one time or another have seen the possibility of describing or explaining one aspect of language (e.g. its structure or its sentence production) with rigour and consistency by circumscribing this aspect alone, while excluding all others. Some of the closed conceptual frameworks which resulted have admittedly served a useful purpose in the development of the science of linguistics to the extent that it was possible to concentrate and systematize research on some important aspect of that complex and multidimensional phenomenon that we call language. In this way, we have been able to discover how languages evolve and are related in a systematic way, how much of the system of each language can be understood

as a set of recurring linear segments in the stream of speech which, in turn, can be the result of the transformation of certain basic syntactic structures into spoken or written sentences through the incorporation of such segments of the language as morphemes, words and phonemes. Students of language can be enlightened by the understanding of such advances in the science of linguistics, but only if they can place each new development into the proper context. But this has been difficult, if not impossible, for the student of language and particularly for the language teacher. For there has been an unfortunate conflict between so many of the language sciences (semantics, linguistics, phonology), which, in reality are complementary, and not mutually exclusive. What has usually happened is that each limited conceptual framework has been accepted as if it alone explained the phenomenon of language. Some of the theories on which these frameworks have been based have been nothing more than working hypotheses, valid only under certain conditions. But their limitations were soon forgotten, especially when attempts were made to apply the theories. What had also been forgotten was that, not only does the discipline of linguistics have no monopoly on the study of language, but that a purely linguistic theory cannot explain language. One example will suffice.

Almost all modern linguistic theories of language, including those of Saussure, Bloomfield and Hjelmslev, have postulated a dichotomy between diachronic and synchronic linguistics. This postualte has been workable with the type of analysis made up to now---descriptive and historical grammars. But it is a fiction, ignorable only under two conditions: (a) where language change is so slow and minute as to be imperceptible within the same generation, and (b) where the refinement of analysis does not go beyond distinctive features.

Since language must evolve, there must be variation and vacillation; otherwise, we would always be dealing with dead languages. The speed of language evolution through vacillation varies according to the social elements of control---likely to be different in illiterate and bilingual communities.

A code is a convention. In language, it is a social convention adopted by a speech community. But at any one point, certain elements of the code are preferred to others. At any one point in time, some language signs entering the code will be adopted quickly while others will be integrated gradually; any of these may disappear quickly or gradually, independently of their rate of adoption. Since the language code and its systems are in constant motion, the most appropriate description is not a synchronic one.

Saussure's original synchronic analogy compares a language to a game of chess, in which the state of the board is constantly changing according to certain fixed rules which the players must follow. This is an often quoted analogy used to explain the classical dichotomy between diachronic and synchronic linguistics. [26] The game can be described diachronically in terms of the moves of the players according to the rules, or synchronically in terms of the resulting distribution of the pawns on the board at any given point in time. The analogy and the dichotomy have indeed been useful as a basis for the elaboration of descriptive grammars and dictionaries of standardized languages, the very standardization of which is a factor in attenuating the natural variation and evolutionary tendencies of language.

Since few speakers will deviate greatly from the norm, and these may be limited to groups that are peripheral in space and time---dialect speakers, the very young and the very old---the number of people so deviating will not be in the majority, especially in those few languages which have a long

tradition of standardization. Even for these highly standardized languages, the analogy is far from perfect, since if one were to freeze this linguistic game of chess at any point in time, in addition to finding some pawns in some squares and others in others, one would find a number of pawns between squares, some emerging ones on one edge and entering ones on the other edge of a number of squares, squares of different dimensions, chessmen of different sizes, shapes and colours---bishops with the features of horses and horses becoming bishops---and procedures which were laxer or stricter than others in a game where the rules are forever changing.

In other words, we would find a state of entropy, of continual transformation within the system. For all living languages are in a perpetual state of entropy---some more than others, and at some times more than at other times.

Repeated interference from another code tends to increase this entropy, whereas literacy and standardization tend to decrease it. Two related unwritten languages will tend to blend into one more quickly than will two equally related languages with standardized written forms used by most of their speakers. And in formally standardized codes, interference will reach the point of resistance earlier than in nonstandardized languages, for the gap between what speakers of standard languages say and what they know they should be saying becomes quickly more apparent and tends to promote in the literate community such formalized defenses as purism, irredentism, and language repression. [27]

In the permissible range of variation in usage, the entropy of a language is affected by the degree of tolerance of the people who speak it. Some communities tolerate interference more than do others. This tolerance may have historical determinants; but it is also related to literacy, standardization and language contact. In nonliterate communities, it may be wider than in literate societies. In unilingual communities, it may be less than in multilingual groups where the incidence of use of linguistic features from several languages by any individual may actually form a single continuum. And in nonliterate, multilingual groups, the range of tolerance may even become identical to mutual intelligibility achieved by a speech economy whose norm is the sum of all operant codes. In such situations, the new elements entering the speech of individuals from another language or dialect may do so entirely by chance and never be heard again; or they may be repeated with such consistency as to give the impression that they have always been there.

If this is the generation whose language use is being described, the investigator is faced with what appears to him either as interference or as a code with a high degree of free-variation. Both are illusions conditioned by the postualte that we are dealing with one or two synchronic codes. And the treatment of bilingual material as synchronic becomes more and more complex as one multiplies cases, because in any evolving code, the degree of individual variation is a function of the rate of change.

And it is precisely the speed of this evolving code in situations of language contact that makes its description and measurement so difficult. What has to be described and measured is a two-dimensional continuum, one of which is continually alternating at the moment the other is inconsistently vacillating. Anyone making a standard grammar of the language on the basis of a synchronic description at a fixed point in time is treating the language as a fiction. This fiction of the synchronic, which has served so well in generating the abstractions of descriptive and transformational grammars, becomes quite unreal when used to describe the unstable and rapidly evolving systems of nonliterate communities and of languages in contact.

In addition to ignoring the historical context of each language, both descriptive and transformational linguistics had discounted the social context as well, since the sounds, words and sentences were by definition the objects of their respective sciences. This is understandable when one studies the history and development of linguistics. One of the historical reasons why language forms became the objects of study was that linguistics was the grandchild of philology, which was based on the study of written documents (still, it must be remembered, in context). Philology in turn had been the offspring of religions based on the establishment and interpretation of the true word. Grammar, originally based on the written texts, was one of the byproducts which structural linguistics attempted to improve and make scientific. As linguistics became more structural and abstract, using its own set of technical symbols instead of everyday language, it touched on and infringed upon the domain of symbolic logic.

Both transformational grammar and structural linguistics made words, sounds and sentences the objects of study, treating these objects in isolation from their concrete contexts. Such a study of language units as objects could not become objective, for its objectivity consists in rejecting what characterizes the object with regard to "its objectively constituent traits", on the ground that these could be handled afterwards by someone else once the real business of doing linguistics had been completed. Anything that did not concern the stated object of study or which did not come into the arbitrary limits of the closed framework was therefore put into the waste-basket, as it were. Such was the fate of contextual variables in most of the linguistics that has been applied to language teaching. This, coupled with the compartmentalization of the study of language into theories, schools, and disciplines converted linguistics into the *Sisyphosarbeit* of a generation of believers who wasted their youth putting untangled pieces of thread into various waste-baskets---phonetic, semantic and pragmatic. [28] Language teachers and other users of these linguistics began wondering whether there would be any thread left that they could use.

Not that there was nothing on the market. The most popular brands were supplied by appliers of structural linguistics and transformational grammars. A brief examination of these shows why they did not succeed in doing for the language teachers what they claimed they could do. Descriptive structural studies of a language may admittedly have taken their facts from out of the mouths of one or more typical speakers, called native informants. Quite often, what happened in practice was that a couple of informants were arbitrarily selected and fortuitously declared to be typical of the social group. Their reliability was rarely questioned. The interviewers or field workers were supposed to be objective, homogeneous, interchangeable and devoid of any expectations. The facts were quite different. Quite often, the paid informant stressed what seemingly gave pleasure to the field worker who showed obvious gratification when his theoretical expectations were confirmed. When the field worker was not a native speaker of the language, as was often the case, his description was both erroneous and quite removed from reality. No one was any the wiser when there were no literate native speakers to object; but when there were, the result was sometimes a complete fiasco.

Since structural linguistics did not take context into account and often ignored the existence of the meaning of words, it was not surprising that applied to language teaching, it did not produce the results expected. [29] Bloomfield having placed the study of meaning outside the province of linguistics, those who applied his linguistics to language teaching did so without recourse to meaning. Their products were methods of language teaching limited

to the iteration of pattern drills and phonetic exercises. Thus it was that a legitimate method of scientific inquiry became distorted into a fruitless didactic doctrine.

A reaction against the neglect of meaning in structural descriptions resulted in an attempt to analyse meaning as if it were structure. And the expression of meaning as the transformation of a basic underlying structure in the code (competence) to resulting sentences in the message (performance). It was on this theoretical construct of competence that transformational generative grammar was founded. Only sentences which the transformational model generated according to the transformational method were valid, since language was a closed system built along the model. According to this theory of generative grammar, language was equated with a quasi-infinite number of sentences capable of being generated by generative grammar. The failure of such a theory both as a language teaching instrument and as a general theory of language was in part due to the fact that, like its predecessors, its exponents tried to push in more than the conceptual framework would hold. Trying, for example, to account for the transformation of general meanings into specific sentences, without benefit of context, could only lead to an impasse.

The abstractions of transformational generative grammar, like those of descriptive and structural linguistics, could only have been validated with reference to the users and uses of specific languages located in space and time. Both these linguistic doctrines had assumed however that language was a self-contained system which was independent of its use. It therefore followed that language should be acquired through such manipulative skills as pattern practice and the control of these formal skills should precede any expressive use of the language.

Yet, neither the pattern learning model of the structuralists nor the innate ideas of the transformationalists accounted for language as a means of communication. Neither were functional. Nor were all the "contrastive studies" which the doctrines generated, since they compared or "contrasted" only the codes, independent of their use in context and divorced from the practices of the users of the languages being compared.

It was in fact the function of context which constituted one of the main differences between contrastive and differential linguistics. The basis for the study of differential linguistics has always been, not a comparative description of two codes, but bilingual samples of equivalent discourse in context, and contextual meanings as conveyed in two different languages. [30]

In sum, structural linguistics tried to describe the structures of languages; transformational grammar attempted to explain how some of these structures could generate specific sentences. Structural linguistics reached a dead end when its exponents tried to explain more than was possible without benefit of meaning; transformational grammar attained its impasse when its practitioners tried to explain meaning by ignoring context. Neither could explain the phenomenon of language within their limited conceptual framework. Practicing language teachers were among the first to notice that such theories could not solve their problems in the classroom; hence, their disillusionment with linguistics---pure or applied.

A few language teachers began to realize that they had become the confused and often captive audience of the trials and errors of exponents of a young discipline who were trying hard to appear scientific. What often happened was that before one basic problem was solved, linguistics concentrated on another unsolved problem in such a way that this study became fashionable. Those

still working on the other problem had then to operate outside the newly formed conceptual framework, which sometimes became identified with the science itself. Anyone not doing it was not doing linguistics. Those working within the fashionable framework, however, likewise tended to congregate around fashionable theories or methods. This, it may be argued, was only human. The trouble arose, however, when the theories became dogmas and the methods were accepted as doctrine. A language teacher who was not a member of the in-group of linguists was likely to be impressed by their claims to the extent of identifying them with the science of linguistics, without which one could not possibly claim to be a language teacher. Once language teachers became believers in a popular nostrum, what others, the non-believers, did or had done appeared either unimportant or erroneous. Instead of seeing language for the multi-faceted phenomenon which it was, these teachers began to believe that the magic formula to successful language teaching would be found in the specific and limited area of linguistics or psychology which was fashionable at the time.

One may be permitted to ask why some concern for context was not transmitted to language teachers along with the large doses of linguistics which were administered to so many of them. For the same reason that the people with the strongest voices are heard to the detriment of those who speak in quiet hesitation. The growing vogues of structural linguistics during the forties and fifties and its consciously promoted attempt to apply it to language teaching by obliging teachers to study the subject, resulted in the propagation of a belief that this so-called applied linguistics would solve all the problems of the language teacher. A language teacher could not obtain the results he desired unless he mastered the subject. The very mass of the production of books, articles, periodicals, courses, seminars, conferences and publicity had within two decades extended its influence throughout the Western World. The demise of the movement, however, had little to do with the dissatisfaction of the language teachers.

It was due to the fact not that structural linguistics ignored context, but that it did not explain how the structures became sentences. Many other gaps in the structuralist methods could have been singled out for study, but it so happened that some people put up a good argument for the importance of the transformations of basic structures into sentences as most worthy of study. Transformational grammar became the vogue of the post-war generation of linguistics, and the relative importance of structural linguistics as a subject of study proportionately decreased.

Experienced language teachers, however, had known all along that the application of structural linguistics and transformational grammar reduced language teaching to a formalism which was even more removed than the old methods, since it had little to offer on the facts of the language being taught. Some of the older grammars (like those of Jespersen and Kruisinga for English, for example) were far more complete, contextual, informative and usable---more pragmatic, as it were, than the laconic structural restatements made according to the dictum of the less said the better. The new structural and transformational grammars had simply restated their own selection of the known facts for the purpose of proving the theory, while often leaving out what could not be fitted into it.

Pragmalinguistics is supposed to make up for the lack of context in modern linguistics. For many experienced language teachers, contextualization is nothing new. For the long history of language teaching, common sense has from time to time penetrated the fog of dogma, in an attempt to establish a relationship between language learning and reality. This relationship is called for by the most basic principles of didactics as re-iterated by Comenius, Hobart and

most practical educators. It necessarily forms an integral part of any language lesson. [31] Other language teachers, revolting against linguistic theory and its application in the classroom through purely formal and iterative drilling, tended to make context the content of all language lessons. This was made possible through the mass production of audiovisual materials in the decades following the Second World War.

Advances in the technology of sound and picture reproduction made it possible to mass produce films and film strips, with accompanying sound that could be packaged into complete courses. The way this was done had a profound effect on the use of methods and techniques of language teaching---and on the use of context. Of the several options for using context, however, the producers chose the easiest and the least effective. They selected the context almost at random, created a dialogue around it, illustrated it in a sequence of pictures, recorded and photoreproduced the film strips and added some exercises. Some producers admittedly took the precaution of making sure that the dialogue was written in a basic vocabulary, but few took the trouble of making sure that the sequence of words and structures thus imposed was the optimal one. The total effect of this was the production of courses which taught discourse rather than language. So that, although the learners came out with the appropriate sentence for the situations taught, they did not develop the ability of independently generating sentences within that part of the system which they had supposedly assimilated.

Even the best of the audiovisual courses---some of them produced at great expense by government-financed development---seem to have done no better than the home-made variety. Both, however, did promote a different type of language learning---efficient within the few contexts covered, but incapable of leading beyond. What had been taught were sets of sentences learned in and dependent upon specific contexts, but not independently generated. The difference between these sentences and those of the pattern-drill or memorized dialogue types was that they had been taught within a context and had at least one sort of contextual meaning. This and the structural meaning and that of the components, in spite of the variations to be supplied by the teacher, was not learned sufficiently to enable the learner to generate very many different sentences independently, let alone maintain a conversation. It was as if pattern practice and contextualization had been mutually exclusive, which it is not. [32]

The materials, however, could theoretically have achieved this end if produced in sufficient variety and abundance and used for the same length of time as a child would be expected to in similar contexts in the home and in the community. But this was obviously impossible, since at the rate of the few hours a week devoted to the foreign language classes, it would have taken more than a lifetime to create as many contexts as the child had experiences before the age of eleven. And even if this had been possible, the rate of forgetting would have eliminated much of the learning. One answer to this dilemma was the intensive course. But such courses succeeded only in covering the same material in a more concentrated time-span---admittedly, with more learning efficiency. They had, however, been used as successful introduction to living in a foreign community, the multiple real contexts of which were then used for further learning through observation and imitation.

It is evident that, if a foreign language is to be learned in school in only a small fraction of the time in which it is learned in the context of reality, the materials and methods must not only possess all the properties of

such contexts but that the process must be very much more efficient and much less wasteful.

This realization was supplied not by an analysis of linguistic structure but by an inquiry into the nature of meaning. The semanticist, I.A. Richards, had suggested the theoretical basis for such an approach in the early forties by creating the concept of structural contextualization whereby the learning of the language (code) through discourse (sentences in context) would be the main activity of the language learner and the main pre-occupation of the teachers and method makers. The functional learning unit was not the phoneme, as had been claimed at the time, nor the sentence-pattern, on which pattern practice was based, nor the context alone, which later dominated most audiovisual language courses, but an all-integrated sentence-situation unit which was continually varied within corresponding contextual changes. It was through these variations that the learner would arrive at the structures and units of the language, the voluntary and independent use of which would permit one to generate unlearned sentences appropriate to new and different contexts.

The first beginnings would be based on the simplest and most available contexts and structures leading to more complex ones in a cumulating continuum, the gradation of which would constitute the optimal learning of language in context. What would make contextualization possible would be the use of specially designed semantic pictures, the sequence of which constituted a sort of pictorial semantics of the particular language, each picture-pattern and its variation having structural parallelism with a corresponding sentence and its variation. The making of materials along these lines was admittedly extremely difficult and time-consuming.

Whether it was this difficulty, or the fact that the theory was not fully elaborated, or that its arrival was at a time when phoneme-oriented structural linguistics was the raging fashion, or that it was first applied to the teaching of Basic English, with its world-language connotation, the fact remains that it was ignored by the majority of language teachers and had little follow-up.

Instead, language teaching lived through the pattern practice period, audio-lingual approaches, structural approaches and structuro-global audio-visualism. The latter purported to deal only with the standardized situations selected either directly by the method maker, or indirectly as the result of a sociolinguistic investigation. In either case, these "standardized situations" were arbitrary. What was involved was determined by the method, not by the situation, since the real social and personal elements were lacking. In this way, the medium became the method---of one may calque Marshall MacLuhan thus.

As a result, two contradictory tendencies held sway in the language teaching of the sixties and seventies both of which promoted the learning of erroneous utterances. The application of structural linguistics and generative grammar promoted errors of under-contextualization. The holistic audio-visual approach of structuro-globalism promoted errors due to over-contextualization. Under-contextualization produced utterances which were grammatically correct but unidiomatic in that they did not fit the situations in which they could be used. Over-contextualization tended to produce utterances which were idiomatic but inappropriate when used outside the context in which they were learned.

For some language teachers and parents, however, contextualization through pictures could only be artificial. For others, even the most efficient language teaching could not replace the social contexts in which languages had

always been successfully learned. They began to dispair of having the learners ever acquire a second language in language classes. For them, language could only be acquired in the context of its use. If a language was to be learned at all in school, it must be through its use in school situations, particularly in the learning of subjects through the second language. It was observed that one of the reasons why children learn languages better and quicker in the street than in the classroom is that they do so through natural contexts. [33]

The primacy of context was perhaps the main reason why children become bilingual in the home. [34] The growing literature of case studies of this is a cumulation of evidence indicating the ease and rapidity with which children master a second language in the context of the family, even though the learning process may be in itself haphazard and inefficient. [35]

The second revolt away from linguistics in language teaching was therefore in the direction of bilingual schooling. [36] It was noted that the learning of a second language in context was one of the reasons why children succeeded in becoming bilingual by attending binational schools such as, for example, the one in Berlin [37] Because such schools could be structured in such a way as to provide a meeting place for two communities, the context was wider than it could be in the purely immersion type of bilingual schooling where the pupils came from unilingual homes of the same language community and only the teacher was bilingual---or unilingual in the other language. [38] Yet, immersion schooling was the best possible formula for some unicultural communities. An even wider social context became possible where the two communities constituted the focal point to two larger continuous civilizations of comparable culture, size and strength, such as, for example, the Hispanic and the Anglo-American. [39]

There was also evidence however that a child, having left the bilingual context, could forget the second language just as easily and rapidly, especially if neither the school nor the community support it. [40]

Interest of the early seventies in the pragmatics of language, therefore, is not the direct outcome of the work of pragmatic philosophers but a revolt against the neglect of the users and uses of language which was characteristic of the fashionable language theories of the fifties and the sixties. Linguists and particularly language teachers had gathered sufficient evidence---and courage---to protest that context could not be brushed aside as being merely "trivial".

Although the arrival of pragmatic linguistics was welcome, it too is fraught with dangers for the practicing teacher. The main danger is that it should become abstract and theoretically oriented with supposedly universal applicable situational categories. [41] A second danger is that it should induce teachers to neglect the fundamentals of language acquisition, that is, the capacity to produce independently a maximum number of sentences with a minimum number of elements. A third danger is that it should become exclusive, that it be considered an alleged single remedy for all language teaching problems as the same sort of nostrum, or fad, as had other language theories---rather than as critical re-orientation of priorities. Finally, there is the danger that pragmatic disciplines use language teachers as dependent consumers. Until language teachers and their trainers can thus distinguish the dangers from the opportunities, and free themselves from subservience to other disciplines, no autonomous study of language teaching and learning can evolve.

NOTES

1 Contrariwise, pragmatists have used such terms as *metalinguistics* and *metalanguage* to refer to language about language, which could include most of linguistics

2 Ogden & Richards 1923

3 Halliday 1975: 74

4 Haberland & Mey 1977. If linguistic pragmatics embraces linguistics, that is, language about language, it would seem to integrate both meanings of *metalinguistics*, that of the structuralists and that of the logicians.

5 A representative sampling of the writings of Peirce, James, Lewis, Mead and others may be seen in Thayer's anthology (1970). A useful survey of the movement, with an accompanying bibliography, is Thayer's *Meaning and Action* (1968).

6 Morris 1946

7 Carnap 1934

8 A survey of contemporary pragmatics as it relates to linguistics has been made by Brigitte Schlieben-Lange (1975). It covers the history and the development of pragmatics during this century and points out the differences in schools and approaches, with particular reference to the thinking of Jürgen Habermas (1968). See also the two volumes edited by Siegfried Schmidt (1977).

9 Quine 1960

10 Wittgenstein 1960

11 Mackey 1972*b*

12 For a justification of this, see Albert Einstein's article on the genesis of scientific language (Einstein 1965).

13 Most references to the various words for snow in Eskimo are based, not on any special study of this semantic field in the various dialects of the language, but simply on dictionary equivalents. That is why Whorf and other anthropological linguists cite only three of four words (Mackey 1972*b*).

14 Mackey (in press)

15 Although the authors of the cross-cultural semantic atlas seem to be interested in what cultures have in common, their research is most revealing in exposing the differences (Osgood 1962). In the symposium on the cross-cultural generality of affective meaning systems which I attended in Iran in 1967, there were papers on such topics as the meaning and function of work contexts in different cultures (Jakobovits 1967). Some of this meaning, of course, is also conveyed through non-verbal behaviour, the function of which has been studied by Hall (1958 & 1969) and Watson (1970).

16 Searle 1969. Attempts have been made by Ure (1969), Chiu (1977) and others to describe and measure specific registers. For a critique of Searle and Austin, see Henne (1975).

17 Gregory 1967

18 Brown & Gilman 1960

19 Strevens 1965: 85

10 Joos 1962

21 Mackey 1976*b*

22 Mackey 1972*c*

23 Mackey & Savard

24 Mackey 1963

25 Haberland & Mey 1977

26 Saussure 1915: 125-127

27 Mackey 1970

28 Bar-Hillel 1971

29 After a quarter of a century and hundreds of books, articles and conferences on applied linguistics in language teaching, there seems to have been little, if any, betterment of language learning. There is still no proof that any alleged improvement in the quality or quantity of language learning in the classroom is attributable to the application of linguistics by the language teacher. There seems, however, to be some evidence to the contrary: language analysis may inhibit language learning (Mackey 1963).

30 The difference between contrastive and differential linguistics may be illustrated by comparing Di Pietro's survey (1971) with such examples as Vinay & Darbelnet 1958 and Malblanc 1961.

31 Mackey 1965: Part III

32 Mackey (I.S.) 1967

33 Mackey 1976*a*: Part II

34 Mackey (I.S.) 1977

35 Afendras & Pianarosa 1975

36 Mackey & Ornstein 1977

37 Mackey 1972*a*

38 Lambert & Tucker 1972

39 Mackey & Beebe 1977

40 Mackey & Anderson 1977. For

41 For a discussion of the theoretical status of situational models, see Bayer (1977).

The exclusion of universal theoretical models of pragmatics does not mean that contexts must be eliminated in the use of quantitative methods in the comparison of languages. For examples of such methods, see Mackey (1971, 1974 and 1976*a*: Part II)

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